



THE INDEPENDENT

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They don't vote: Labour's U-turn on animal testing

Tony Blair is to break a pre-election pledge to reduce the number of animals used in experiments, including testing of new cosmetics. The U-turn, Jason Bennett writes, is just one of a number of broken promises involving the treatment of animals.

Government funding to develop alternatives to using live animals for experiments is to be axed by nearly a quarter, it will be disclosed this week. Labour has also reneged on promises to set up a Royal Commission into the issue of animal experiments, it is understood.

And experiments on animals to test new cosmetics are to continue, despite a promise by Tony Blair during the general election that they would be scrapped.

The policy changes will be revealed in an official report published this week. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, will say that there appears to be "no realistic prospect in the foreseeable future" of an end to animal experimentation.

Anti-vivisection and animal rights groups will be dismayed at the news.

total number of animals used in tests. It is understood that an interim report by the Home Office's Animal Procedures Committee, that contains medical experts, welfare workers and lawyers, will be published this week.

The report, all the recommendations of which have been accepted by the Home Secretary, will say that cosmetic testing must go ahead until there are more non-animal alternatives. The report concludes that new legislation is not needed.

The budget to pay for new research into finding alternatives is being cut next year by £60,000 to £197,000. The Animal Procedures Committee is understood to be extremely angry at the reduction.

But the Home Office is to increase the number of inspectors used to check laboratories and breeding farms, and introduce a toughened code of practice, and better training for animal workers. Anyone using animals will also have to give details of what non-animal alternatives it has considered.

Lord Williams of Mostyn, the Home Office minister responsible for animals, has ruled out a Royal Commission.

It is understood that ministers have been convinced that banning animal experiments would have a damaging effect on industry, would hinder medical breakthroughs and is likely to result in animal experiments taking place in less regulated countries.

In response to the report, Jack Straw will say: "Whilst the Government looks forward to the time when animals will not need to be used in scientific procedures, there appears no realistic prospect that this will be possible in the foreseeable future. In the meantime, it is essential that animals are only used where this is fully justified and where suitable alternatives are not available."

He says that although the failure to ban testing of cosmetic products may "disappoint" many critics that it is important to "balance the likely costs to animals against the benefits to man, animals or the environment."

While the number of "normal" animals being used in experiments has declined significantly the growth in the use of genetically modified animals has increased sharply. This could lead to an acceleration in the total number of animal tests in the future.

Animal rights groups have become increasingly frustrated with the Government. Barry Horne, a remand prisoner in Bristol Prison who is charged with possessing explosive devices, has held two hunger strikes in protest at Government pre-election promises on animal experimentation.

A spokeswoman for the Barry Horne Support Campaign said: "We are totally disgusted that the Government has gone back on its pledge... we hoped that Labour would keep their word."



Tiny tears: The eyes of a laboratory rabbit show the reality of testing cosmetics for irritability on animals

Photograph: PA

EXCLUSIVE

About 2,800 animals were used last year to test cosmetics, mostly rabbits, guinea pigs and rats, to discover whether they caused problems such as irritation to skin and eyes, and side effects on reproductive organs. The vast bulk of animals - 2.7 million last year - are used for medical research, and testing pharmaceuticals and equipment such as chemical and biological warfare suits.

Labour's electioneering document, *New Life For Animals*, which was signed by Tony Blair, said: "Labour is totally committed to stopping cosmetic testing on animals. We are appalled that it was the UK government that watered down European Parliament moves to ban cosmetic testing, which could delay the implementation of a ban. Cosmetics can now be tested by non-animal methods, and the beauty business already has at its disposal a huge range of perfectly safe ingredients."

The document, which was not part of the Manifesto, added: "We will support a Royal Commission to review the effectiveness and justification of animal experiments and to examine alternatives." It also promised to work towards reducing the

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How the Pre-Raphaelites got a bad name



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CROSSWORDS Page 32 and the Eye, page 9

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TODAY'S OTHER NEWS

Market tumble on Brown Monday

The city dubbed it Brown Monday as the markets tumbled in response to Gordon Brown's uncertain position on the European single currency. It provided a difficult background for Tony Blair's five-hour meeting with the German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, at Chequers. For his part, Mr Brown promised to come clean in a statement to the Commons next week. Page 6

Cancer smear shake-up

Cervical smear testing faces a national shake-up after an independent inquiry found serious failings in a Kent hospital which had to recall more than 90,000 women for testing. Page 5

Russell murder charge

A 37-year-old man was charged last night with the murders of Lin and Megan Russell and the attempted murder of Josie Russell. Michael Stone, 37, Gillingham, will appear before Medway magistrates at Chatham this morning.

The killings of Mrs Russell, 45, and her daughter Megan, six, in July 1996 shocked the nation. They were bludgeoned to death in a country lane near the village of Chillenden, Kent. Megan's sister Josie, now 10, survived the attack.

Angst of Nineties Man

Nineties Man is angst-ridden, confused and selfish according to a survey prepared for the advertising industry by the Henley Centre for Forecasting. The researchers found that "New Man" is a figment of women's imaginations, while "New Lad" is a way of avoiding responsibilities. Page 9

Care link to suicides

Suicide rates among young men who had been in care in North Wales children's homes were 19 times the national average. Page 3

Kidnap: 'Saudis to blame'

Saudi Arabia is behind the kidnapping of Henry Thompson, a British aid worker held by tribesmen in the mountains of Yemen, according to senior Yemeni officials. They have accused their northern neighbours of trying to use the abductions as a means of destabilising its relations with other countries. Page 3

Literacy aim for schools

Schools and local education authorities in deprived areas will no longer be able to plead poverty as a reason for low achievement, the government has said. It wants to ensure 80 per cent of 11-year-olds reach the required standards within the lifetime of this parliament. Page 8

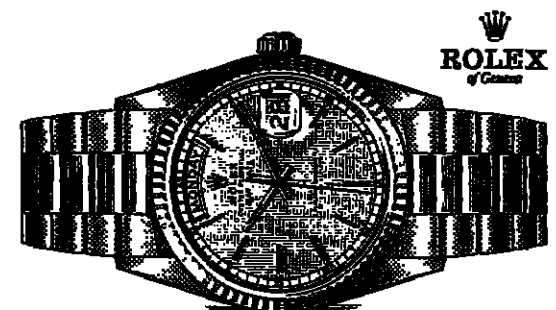
Forsyth to retire

Frederick Forsyth, whose thrillers such as *The Day of the Jackal* and *The Dogs of War*, have sold millions, has decided not to write any more novels. Page 2

SEEN & HEARD

Wanted - 100 volunteers with bad breath, must not mind repeatedly breathing out while other people wrinkle their noses in the name of research. Scientists at the Faculty of Applied Science at the University of West England, are hoping the human guinea pigs will help them find a cure for halitosis by 2001. They will be required to breathe into a sensor system which will reveal the compounds that cause the problem, then the experts will try and identify what can be done. Let's hope 100 best friends are prepared to tell a few home truths in the interests of medicine.

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2/BRIEFING

COLUMN ONE

To join or not to join? Fingernails pay the price

Diana, Princess of Wales did it. The singer Gloria Estefan boasted recently that she had given it up, but Gordon Brown still does it to excess. The Chancellor's badly-bitten finger nails mark him out as a man "out of control", according to one expert who was approached for comment on the subject yesterday.

Amid the furor over the future of the pound and the whirl of accusations and counter-accusations about what Mr Brown's spin-doctors did or did not say, a really serious issue has emerged: why are the Chancellor's nails bitten to the quick? Is the man in charge of the nation's finances suppressing rising feelings of panic by chewing off the ends of his own fingers? The nation clearly deserves to be told.

As Mr Brown launched a new electronic trading system for the Stock Exchange and failed again to explain the Government's position on the single currency, the attention of some of the journalists present was clearly wandering. Within hours, Cary Cooper, the ubiquitous professor of psychology from the University of Manchester's Institute of Science and Technology, had been brought to the phone to express his fears for the Chancellor.

Confusion over the single market was clearly causing Mr Brown a great deal of anxiety, he told the Press Association. "It seems whatever he does or says he is damned. He is stuck in the middle of an awful mess and is trying to balance an enormous number of factors at once. Chewing nails is very common for people like him who feel stressed and out of control."

Reaching for a bottle of foul-tasting paint-on repellent was not the answer, he added. The trouble was, the habit which had reduced Mr Brown's nails to mere stubs was "a reflection of stress and unhappiness." What he needed was a holiday. Given that the Parliamentary recess ends next week, he seemed highly unlikely to get one. Asked whether Mr Brown was "a man out of control," the Chancellor's spokesman refused to comment. Watch this space.

— Fran Abrams

CALLING ALL STUDENTS

This Friday, *The Independent* will be publishing the first part of *The Higher Education Guide*, a direct and down to earth guide to the universities and colleges you may be applying for next year.

Geared towards everyone planning to go into higher education, as well as an aid for parents and careers advisers, the guide offers

concise descriptions of universities and higher education colleges throughout Britain. It is distilled from *The Student Book 1998*, published by Trotman.

The second part of the Guide will appear on Friday October 31. These dates replace those that we gave in the UCAN guide.

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PEOPLE



Mothers' Union snubs Christine Hamilton

First there was Mohamed Al Fayed, then came Martin Bell, and now Neil and Christine Hamilton are facing a opposition from a new quarter - The Mothers' Union. The organisation of Christian women, epitomising the values of middle England, almost achieved what so many others had failed to do, shut up Mrs Hamilton.

Just a few days before Mrs Hamilton was due to launch her *Bumper Book of British Battleaxes* at the Mothers' Union premises, they decided it would not be "suitable", effectively leaving her without a platform. Even a personal appeal by Mrs Hamilton failed to sway the MU.

Eventually frantic last minute efforts by the publishers, Robson Books, managed to secure an alternative venue for the launch tomorrow night. Both Mrs Hamilton and her publishers are furious at what happened.

The cancellation took place towards the end of last week. Neil Hamilton said yesterday: "Obviously we are not happy about it. There is nothing in the book which could be deemed to be offensive or upsetting, quite the contrary. Christine went to see them herself, to ask if she was the problem, and they said

that was not the case. I don't know if they have been noddled or not, I have got no evidence to support that, but it does seem very unfair."

Charlotte Bush, of Robson Books, said: "I am absolutely furious. There was no justification for this. The cancellation took place at a very late stage, and it could have ruined everything."

The Mothers' Union remained unrepentant. An executive, who refused to give her name, was adamant: "This simply was not suitable for us, we did not want that kind of publicity. When the publishers made the booking they did not say what it was for, and this is not the right venue for such a book."

The launch is going ahead at the St James's Court Hotel, just a stone's throw from the offices of lobbyist Ian Greer, where Mrs Hamilton once worked, and who could be said to be the author of some of her husband's misfortune.

It is also near the Commons, where Mr Hamilton, in front of the privileges committee, last week accused Mr Fayed of breaking into Tiny Rowland's safety deposit box at Harrods.

— Kim Sengupta

The Cold War jackal calls it a day



Frederick Forsyth, the best-selling writer known for his right-wing politics, announced yesterday that he is retiring from novel-writing.

Forsyth, left, whose robust Cold-War-era thrillers such as *The Day of the Jackal* and *The Dogs of War* powered him to the top of the best-seller lists in the Seventies, has decided to concentrate on short stories, film scripts and journalism because, he says, there are no interesting plots left.

Forsyth, said before he finished his tenth novel, *Icon*, that it would fulfil his contractual obligations and so be his last. That novel has just been published and Forsyth confirmed yesterday that he will stick to his pledge unless exceptional circumstances made him to return to the genre: "I do not want to write any more political thrillers. Nothing else interests me, there are no other subjects that need to be covered - the Cold War is well over."

"There would have to be a storyline that grabbed me, wouldn't leave me alone and had to be written, to persuade me to return. But that's very unlikely."

Instead, Forsyth's interests have been moving in the direction of nationalist politics. He was last seen at a fringe meeting at the Conservative Party conference in Blackpool speaking against a federal Europe.

Last year, the novelist flirted with the late Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party but announced just before the last election that he would vote for the Tories when he walked into the polling booth, despite feeling their policies on Europe were fatally flawed. Mr Forsyth also appeared as a defender of the Royal Family on Carlton Television's infamous and riotous televised monarchy debate.

Forsyth, 59, who is estimated to have sold over 50 million books, told a Swedish newspaper that it was best to quit while he was still reasonably successful: "A lot of guys retire when they are 60, so why not me?"

— Paul McCann

UPDATE

NUTRITION

Sports drinks 'a waste of money'

Many so-called "sports" and "energy" drinks are little more than sugar-laden soft drinks packed with a cocktail of additives, the Food Commission claimed yesterday. Most people would be better off munching a banana or drinking fruit juice to boost their energy after a work-out, the independent consumer watchdog said in a report.

In a survey of 22 drinks, the commission found they contained up to 19 teaspoons of sugar in a serving, while many relied on high levels of caffeine to provide an "energy rush". Many of the drinks, often costing around £1.50 each, are promoted as diet supplements for athletes, for after-work-out drinks or a part of a sports training programme. The report said that despite high sugar levels in the drinks, only five gave specific measurements for sugar-content while many listed it simply as "carbohydrate".

Rejecting the Food Commission's criticisms, the industry claimed sugar in itself was not bad for people and was present in many foods, including mother's breast milk and fruit. Christine Milburn of the British Soft Drinks Association said they were intended to be taken as part of a balanced diet. Some drinks covered in the survey were not "sports" drinks at all, particularly herbal ones, which were marketed as adult soft drinks, she insisted.

— Glenda Cooper



INDUSTRY

Britain's car production up

A total of 145,202 cars were made in the UK last month, compared with 140,103 in September last year, the Office for National Statistics said yesterday. The number made for export rose from 90,232 in September 1996 to 91,781 last month, while the number produced for the home market was up from 49,871 to 53,421.

Commercial vehicles also had a good month, with production rising from 20,021 in September 1996 to 23,072 last month.

EMPLOYMENT

Offices suffering from brain drain

Workers in some parts of Britain are less qualified than four years ago even though training is becoming increasingly important for office staff, a new report showed yesterday.

Firms will employ fewer clerical and secretarial workers in future, but the number of highly qualified professional and technical staff will increase, according to research for the GMB general union.

Most regions have workers with better qualifications than four years ago, but in four - Gwent, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Northumberland and Central Scotland - staff are less qualified, the report found. The fastest growth in qualifications has been in Hereford and Worcester, Berkshire, the Isle of Wight, Dumfries and Galloway, Dyfed, Cambridgeshire and Shropshire.

The highest level of qualifications were found in the Lothian region of Scotland, followed by Surrey, Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Tayside, Grampian and Avon. The lowest levels were in Gwent, Mid Glamorgan, West Midlands, Essex, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Cwyd, Cleveland and the Isle of Wight.

The report was based on the number of workers with NVQ or SVQ

TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.15	Italy (lira)	2,746
Austria (schillings)	19.70	Japan (yen)	195.32
Belgium (francs)	57.86	Malta (lira)	0.61
Canada (\$)	2.21	Netherlands (guilders)	3.15
Cyprus (pounds)	0.82	Norway (kroner)	11.30
Denmark (kroner)	10.74	Portugal (escudos)	283.88
France (francs)	9.39	Spain (pesetas)	236.06
Germany (marks)	2.81	Sweden (kroner)	12.13
Greece (drachme)	442.72	Switzerland (francs)	2.34
Hong Kong (\$)	12.22	Turkey (lira)	278.177
Ireland (pounds)	1.08	USA (\$)	1.59

Source: Thomas Cook
Rates for information purposes only

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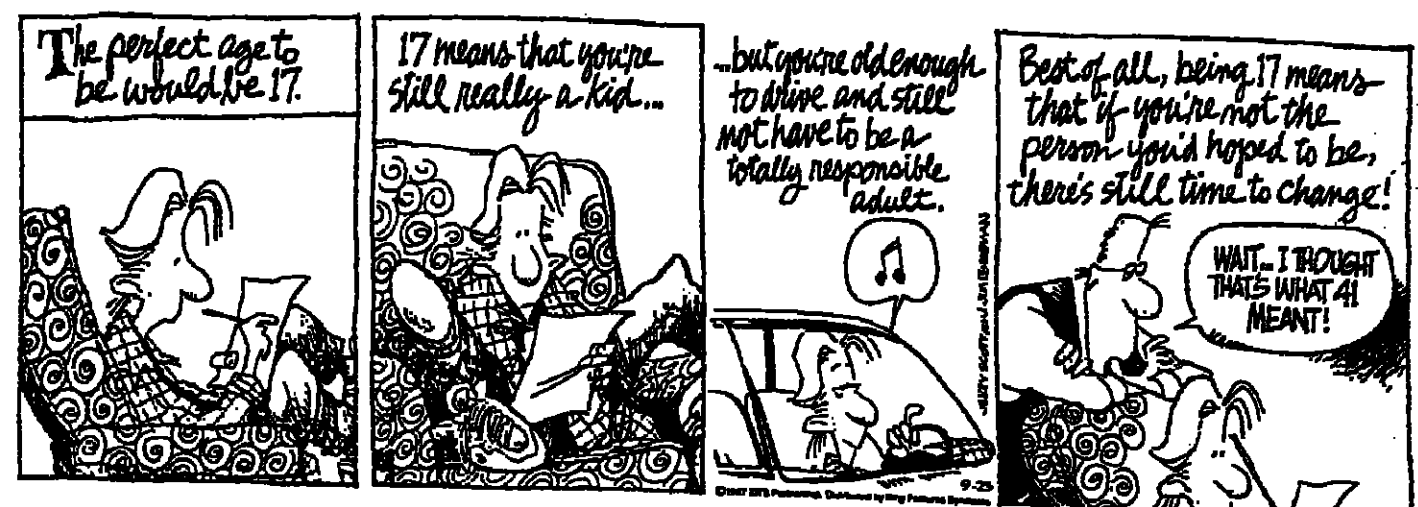
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by Chris Priestley

ZITS



by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

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Twitchers flock for a sight of Siberia

Bird watchers gathering on the Dorset coast yesterday in the hope of seeing the rare Siberian rubythroat, which has been blown thousands of miles off course.

A sighting on Sunday in a field near the Smugglers Inn in Osmington Mills near Weymouth sent twitchers scurrying to the south coast, but by mid-morning Hazel Millington of the Bird Information Service reported that there had been no sign of the bird.

There has been just one previous sighting of this robin-like bird in Britain - on Fair Isle between Orkney and Shetland in 1975.

East winds are thought to have drifted it to the UK after it lost its way while migrating from Siberia to south east Asia.

It is the most unusual of a spate of Siberian migrants which have turned up - mainly on Britain's east and south coasts over recent days - including yellow-browed Pallas's and Raddle's warblers.

Photograph: Tom Pilton

Yemen points finger at Saudis over kidnappings

Saudi Arabia is behind the kidnapping of Henry Thompson, a British aid worker held by tribesmen in the mountains of Yemen, according to senior Yemeni officials. Patrick Cockburn reports from the capital, Sana'a, on the wave of kidnappings of foreigners - and why Saudi Arabia may wish to destabilise its southern neighbour.

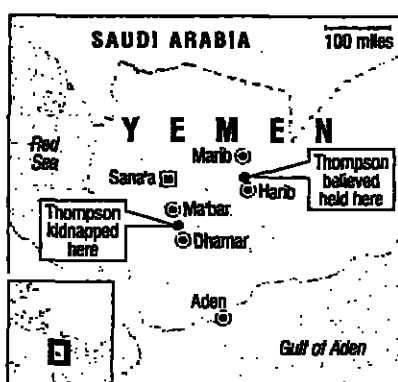
The kidnapping of Henry Thompson last Wednesday as he drove through the central highlands of Yemen was a political act inspired by Saudi Arabia, Yemeni officials have told *The Independent*. They dismiss claims by the tribesmen, who have taken Mr Thompson to their stronghold south east of the capital, that they abducted him to draw attention to their social grievances.

Dr Abdul Karim al-Eryani, the Foreign Minister of Yemen, a poor but populous country in the south of the Arabian peninsula, says that the aim of the kidnapping of Mr Thompson, a 38-year-old specialist

in water projects from Eastbourne, and more than 30 other foreigners this year, is to destabilise his country. He says that whenever Yemen seeks closer relations with a European country, one of their nationals is immediately kidnapped. He points out that "a week after it was known that [Yemeni] President Saleh would make his first official visit to London on 11 November, a Briton was kidnapped."

Diplomats in Sana'a are less certain that the kidnappers fine-tune their abductions, which have hitherto targeted visitors from France, Italy and Germany, to frustrate Yemen's search for potential allies. But they suspect that Saudi Arabia, which has long had strained relations with Yemen, does play a role in the kidnappings by funding the tribesmen who seize foreigners. One diplomat said: "It is not clear if this is official Saudi policy or the pet project of certain Saudi princes."

If Saudi Arabia has played a role in the kidnapping of Mr Thompson, it is likely to exacerbate ill feeling between Britain and the Saudis, with whom relations are already tense because of the trial of the two British nurses, Lucille McLauchlan and Deborah Parry, accused of murder.



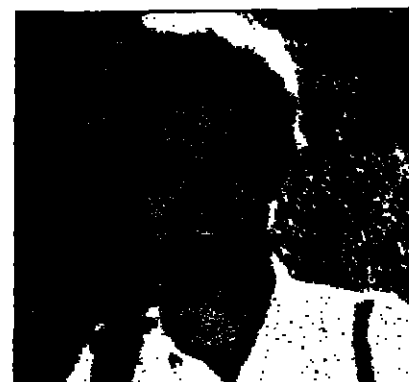
Dr Eryani, interviewed in the foreign ministry in Sana'a, says that the demands of the kidnappers for better water supply, a clinic and an improved road to their district are "camouflage". Asked if there was any way of stopping the abductions, he said: "With external instigation what can we do?" He added that the tribesmen involved act as mercenaries, in the pay of the main Yemeni opposition group, the Mowj, which is supported by Saudi Arabia.

Dr Eryani admits that he has no direct proof that the kidnappings are orchestrated by Saudi Arabia, but other officials, who

wish to remain anonymous, say they have no doubts about Saudi support. One said: "If you ask any Yemeni politician or man in the street he will say that Saudi Arabia is behind it." He added that the first kidnappings of foreigners occurred in 1990 when north and south Yemen first united.

This was seen as a threatening development by Saudi Arabia, where policy towards Yemen is normally handled by Prince Sultan bin Abd al-Aziz, the defence minister. In 1994, Prince Sultan led the way in supporting the secession of southern Yemen which was crushed by President Saleh in a brief civil war which left several thousand dead. The long border between the two countries is also in dispute.

Henry Thompson, an aid worker doing research for the Japan International Co-operation Agency, was seized by tribesmen of the Bani Zabyan tribe six days ago. Charles Thompson, speaking by phone from Britain, told *The Independent* that his brother had been "an aid worker for the last five or 10 years. He has spent much time in Africa and worked for the Japanese for the last one and a half years." He returned from Yemen from seeing his family in Britain two weeks ago. When captured he was driving with his Yemeni translator on the main road, 60 miles south of Sana'a, when he is believed to have been stopped somewhere between the towns of Dhamar and Ma'bar.



Henry Thompson: Missing aid worker

He was then taken east, to the mountains south of the city of Marib, where government control is particularly weak. As with previous kidnappings, the interior ministry in Sana'a immediately started negotiations and was reported to have

"sealed-off the area". In practice this means that the government has put military checkpoints on the very few roads in and out of the region.

The Yemeni government, while privately convinced that Saudi Arabia is behind the kidnappings, also wants to play them down, in order not to frighten off tourists or lead to the withdrawal of foreign aid workers. Yemen's 17 million people are among the poorest in the world, with a per capita income of less than \$500 a year. The economy has stagnated since the Saudis expelled 850,000 Yemeni workers in 1990 because it considered Yemen too sympathetic to Iraq.

Last weekend, the Yemeni interior ministry received a letter from Mr Thompson to his family saying he was "well treated, well fed and comfortable." The ministry added its own gloss, that he was "in good health and enjoying himself." None of those kidnapped recently have been killed or injured, though the driver of a German doctor was killed earlier this month when three men tried to abduct her. Dr Eryani says he believes that foreign governments recognise that what is happening "is a political act. It is not a breakdown of law and order. Instead the object is to smear the country."

Suicide rates at children's homes were 19 times national average

Suicide rates among young men who had been in care in North Wales children's homes was 19 times the national average. Roger Dobson examines evidence drawn up for the tribunal of inquiry into the abuse scandal.

Research by an academic and social services specialist also discovered that the rate for violent deaths of people who had been in the homes was seven times the norm.

The accidental death rate was eight times higher than normal for that age group, according to the study of deaths of young people who had passed through the care system in Cwyd.

The analysis, compiled by Professor Colin Pritchard of Southampton University and John Jillings, who led the first major inquiry into abuse in Cwyd, looked at 13 deaths of young men in Cwyd for their

research. Nearly half the young men died in the early 1990s, at around the times of the council and police investigations into abuse and the subsequent court cases.

The analysis by Professor Pritchard and Mr Jillings, which has been sent to the North Wales tribunal, looked at a number of deaths of young people and compared that with what would be expected in a similar population. They took into account the population and throughput of children's homes and the time span.

It is not clear whether the evidence will be admitted to the tribunal headed by a High Court judge, Sir Ronald Waterhouse. A spokesman for the inquiry said last night: "We have the details and they will be considered in due course. We cannot at this stage say whether or not it will be admitted as evidence."

What they found was that the suicide rate was 19 times the national average and the analysis says that in order to err on the side of caution, the Cwyd

data was compared with the male suicide and mortality figures from 1992, a year which had the highest rate of male suicides in the last 30 years.

An increased suicide rate is often seen as an indicator of abuse as well as depression and anxiety. In the early 1990s, young men were beginning to disclose in detail what had happened to them in care.

The analysis is based on 13 deaths of men aged 16 to 34, seven of whom killed themselves. In a comparable population, averaged for England and Wales, the number of expected deaths would have been only two.

The incidence of accidental death was around eight times the norm, according to the analysis, believed to be the first of its kind.

The report says: "The results are stark and suggest that ex-Cwyd people were a highly vulnerable special population. It should also be remembered that the act of suicide itself but the tip of an iceberg which reflects the extreme of a con-

tinuum of misery experienced by many of the former children."

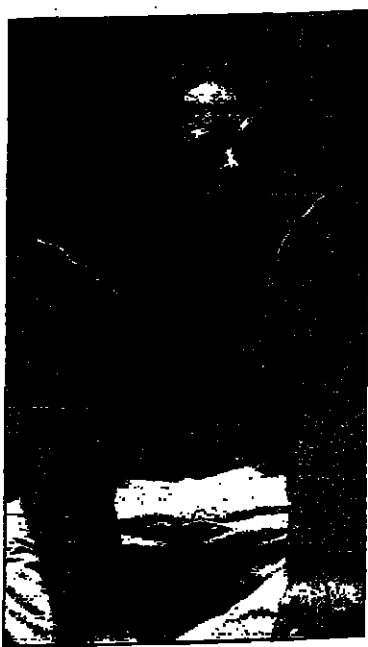
It is thought that the death toll among people who have been in the care system in both Cwyd and Gwynedd over the last two decades is now around 20. Most died in unusual circumstances and some had made allegations of abuse.

The first recorded death was in 1975, when a teenager reportedly slipped on ice and fell from a railway bridge. The second death came when a 16-year-old from the same home killed himself. There followed a succession of cases, including a young man who drowned off a pier in North Wales, a second drowning, two hangings, a fire death, a drug overdose and a death through solvent abuse.

In the 1990s, there were more suicides and deaths including an apparent drug overdose and alcohol misuse.

It is not clear how many of those who died had made allegations of abuse, but some are known to have made such complaints.

IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT



FASHION

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BONK AND BELOVED

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THEATRE

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Lottery cash clears way for museum redesign

A £15.75m grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund yesterday takes the British Museum to within striking distance of the £100m it needs for the ambitious Great Court scheme. Stephen Goodwin looks at the finished design for the 'hidden courtyard' and the future of the historic Round Reading Room.

Scaremongering visions of school children chomping their crisps and sandwiches in the Round Reading Room once used by Marx and George Bernard Shaw were put to flight yesterday with confirmation that the domed room will become a public library.

The Reading Room closes at the end of this week as part of the British Library's move from the museum in Bloomsbury to St Pancras. When the Great Court project is completed - by 2001, all being well - the Reading Room will reopen as a place of study housing a reference library specialising in cultures represented in the museum. While at present admission is restricted to ticket holders, in future the library will be open to all museum visitors.

The upper walls of the Reading Room will be lined with books from the museum's own collections, while shelves at ground-floor level will contain a reference library of some 25,000 books funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

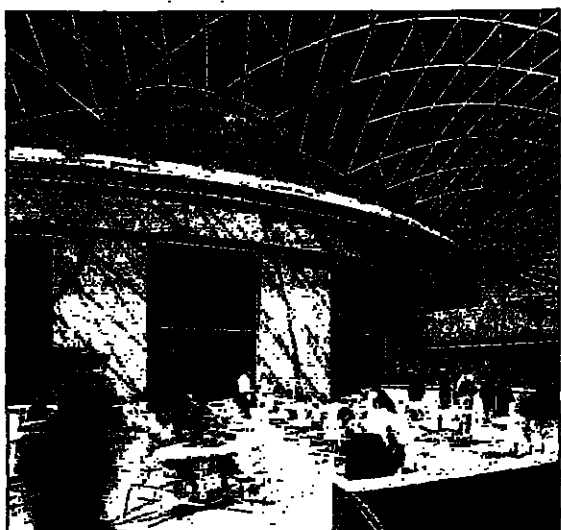
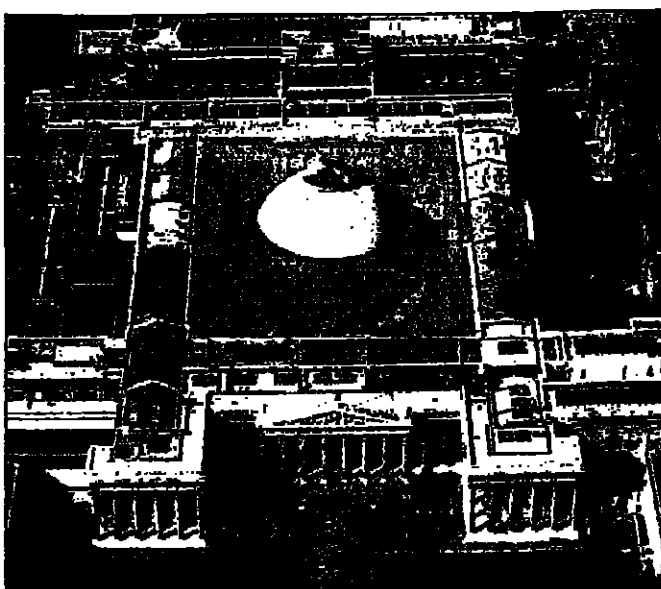
More radical changes will take place beyond the Reading Room. The drum-like building stands in the centre of the 2-acre Great Court. Designed in 1823 by Robert Smirke in the Greek revival style, this elegant space at the heart of the museum effectively vanished with the completion of the Reading Room 24 years later.

Under architect Sir Norman Foster's scheme, the "book stacks" - ugly post-war bunkers - that fill the space around the Reading Room will be demolished and a vaulted glass canopy constructed over the liberated courtyard.

"The impact of this scheme could be as significant as the Pyramid at the Louvre," Lord Rothschild, chairman of the Heritage Lottery Fund said as he disclosed the £15.75m grant. With £30m from the Millennium Commission and £40m from private sources already secured, the museum is confident it can raise the full £97m cost.

The HLF money is earmarked for a Centre for Education within space excavated beneath the courtyard and restoration of the Reading Room. A large dedicated schools area - including somewhere for children to eat those packed lunches - two auditoriums and five seminar rooms will be included.

People pressure is the British Museum's big problem. It was built for 100,000 visitors a year and admits almost 7 million. Yet it has a front hall of only 270 sq metres compared to 3,500 sq metres at the Louvre in Paris, catering for 4.7 million visitors, and 2,500 sq metres at the Metropolitan in New York, with 4.7 million visitors.



An aerial view (top) and the glazed over interior of Foster & Partners' scheme for the Great Court of the British Museum

Police officers named in 'drug confessions' inquiry

The suspension of two detectives following allegations of providing drugs for 'confessions' could lead to the re-examination of hundreds of criminal convictions. *Jason Bennett, Crime Correspondent* says that some cases could be overturned.

The suspension of two detectives following allegations of providing drugs for 'confessions' could lead to the re-examination of hundreds of criminal convictions. *Jason Bennett, Crime Correspondent* says that some cases could be overturned.

The two officers at the centre of the inquiry were named yesterday at the police force which has adopted a tough "zero-tolerance" policy towards crime.

One of the officers briefed Tony Blair about the US-style policing strategy when he visited the Cleveland force in Mid-

dieborough during the general election campaign.

The officers have been suspended following an undercover police inquiry, called "Operation Lancelot". The allegations include that drug-addicted inmates were given heroin in exchange for making confessions to previous crimes.

Allegations of assault against the two officers are also understood to have been made. A small number of other officers are also believed to be under investigation.

If the drugs claims are proved, dozens of convictions involving "tainted" evidence would collapse. An internal police inquiry, overseen by the independent Police Complaints Authority, is believed to be going back a year and is expected to examine up to 500 cases.

The Crown Prosecution Service is reviewing every case that the suspended officers have been involved in for the past 12 months.

Some criminals who had admitted offences have already been freed because their evidence was no longer considered reliable.

The case comes at the same time as several large-scale investigations into alleged corruption at Scotland Yard. In one case, involving allegations of bribes and drugs money, a former police officer is offering to inform on ex-colleagues. Sir Paul Condon, Metropolitan police commissioner, has said that the force contains a "significant minority" of corrupt officers.

Chief constables are press-

ing the Home Secretary for new rules to allow them to sack officers more easily.

The suspended men in Cleveland were named yesterday as Detective Constable Brendan Whitehead, 30, who briefed Mr Blair during his pre-election visit, and Detective Constable Sean Allen, 30.

The officers were identified by the man behind the force's zero-tolerance policy, Detective Superintendent Ray Mallon, and Assistant Chief Constable Richard Brunstrom.

Mr Brunstrom said: "We will follow the evidence - wherever that leads. The inquiry has been going on for some months and involves a number of people. The action we have taken is an indication that the public can trust the police. We will take swift and effective action to deal with the problems."

Mr Mallon said: "We have zero tolerance for lazy, undisciplined officers, and any officer involved in any criminal conduct. There is no need to break the rules. Every officer in Cleveland Constabulary is accountable for what he or she does - everybody knows the difference between right and wrong."

Fresh evidence found in Hanratty case

Previously undiscovered information has shed new light on the case of James Hanratty, who was hanged for murder 35 years ago, MPs were told yesterday.

Sir Frederick Crawford, the chairman of the Criminal Cases Review Commission, set up to investigate alleged miscarriages of justice, said a decision on whether to refer the case to the Court of Appeal would be made within months.

Giving evidence to the Commons Home Affairs Committee after the CCRC's first six months in operation, Sir Frederick said that case workers were making a "very intensive effort" on the Hanratty case and had been "dredging up a lot of information not found previously".

Hanratty was convicted of the so-called "A6 murder" of Michael Gregson, 36, who was shot dead on 22 August, 1961, after being disturbed in a Berkshire cornfield during a tryst with his lover, Valerie Storie. The gunman forced the couple to drive to Deadman's Hill, south of Bedford, where he killed Mr Gregson.

Miss Storie, 22, was raped, shot and left for dead, but survived and although paralysed from the waist down, went on to give evidence against Hanratty.

Campaigners claim this evidence, which was based largely on her memory of the

tone of voice used by her killer before he shot her, would not now be accepted by a court.

Sir Frederick said the CCRC was close to completing its review of the case of Derek Bentley, hanged in 1952 for the murder of a policeman shot dead by his 16-year-old accomplice, Christopher Craig.

He said they were awaiting the full House of Lords ruling on the case of teenager Philip English, who was cleared earlier this year of the murder of a police sergeant by an accomplice while he was under arrest 100 yards away, before delivering their final ruling.

During the hearing, Sir Frederick also admitted to MPs that he had not declared that he was a freemason when he was interviewed for the £88,000-a-year post of chairman. He insisted, however, that CCRC members should only be obliged to declare a conflict of interest if they were involved in reviewing a case involving another freemason.

The committee chairman, Labour MP Chris Mullin, who was heavily involved in the campaign to clear the Birmingham Six, said that there had been a lot of freemasons in Birmingham involved in "obstructing the truth" in that case.

— Ian Burrell

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Trimble leads Unionists out of talks

Ulster Unionists clashed with the Irish government at the peace talks in Belfast yesterday. The party withdrew from the north-south strand of negotiations in a row over the Republic's territorial claim over Northern Ireland.

David Trimble (pictured) and his team left the room after they claimed that David Andrews, the Irish foreign affairs minister, had failed to give a commitment to changing Articles Two and Three of the Republic's constitution which claims jurisdiction.

He added: "Of course Articles Two and Three will be discussed during the substantive element of these talks."



But Mr Andrews said afterwards: "We can make no commitment until we get down to the nitty-gritty of negotiations."

He added: "Of course Articles Two and Three will be discussed during the substantive element of these talks."

Doctors in campaign to target flu jabs

Among the vast majority of employees who call in sick, the "flu" is how they invariably describe a bad cold. But yesterday health workers were asked to spearhead a major campaign to encourage those really at risk to obtain flu jabs.

The campaign, part of National Flu Awareness Week, is an attempt to reduce predicted pressure on the NHS in the coming months.

"The British Medical Association is very concerned about the effect of widespread flu on health services this winter," Dr John Chisholm, chairman of the general medical services committee of the BMA, said yesterday.

"Those who do not need flu immunisation should make sure they have over-the-counter medicine at home to treat their cold and flu symptoms."

Only about half of those most at risk from influenza receive the vaccinations, although the uptake has been increasing each year. High-risk groups include the elderly, and people with chronic heart or respiratory disease, kidney failure, diabetes, and weak immune systems and government health experts want to ensure that this year's 6.5 million available doses of vaccine are given to people who need them.

The vaccine has been produced to cope with the three flu strains expected to be circulating this winter - "Wuhan", "Bayern" and "Beijing".

The last British epidemic was in 1989 when 29,000 people died. In normal years, the death rate is between 3,000 and 4,000.

Pro-Life appeal rejected

The anti-abortion party, the Pro-Life Alliance, yesterday lost its appeal for a judicial review of the BBC's censorship of its general election broadcast.

The BBC cut scenes from the broadcast because claiming it was "totally unacceptable on taste and decency grounds" and would not be broadcast "under any circumstances and at any time".

Peter Duffy QC, representing the Alliance, said a judicial review was needed because the film was cut for political reasons.

However, Master of the Rolls Lord Woolf said that what the BBC broadcasts is covered by its Royal Charter. The courts could sometimes give guidance but not in this case, and he refused to overturn a previous decision not to allow a judicial review.

Barclays hit by second strike

Leaders of thousands of staff at Barclays Bank will decide during this week whether to call further strikes following stoppages yesterday and last Friday.

Leaders of Barclays staff union UniFi and the Banking Insurance and Finance Union declared that 300 branches shut yesterday, that disruption was widespread and more employees went on strike than on Friday. Management counterclaimed that support for the industrial action waned and that only 176 branches closed. Both unions are protesting over the introduction of a performance-related pay system which they claim would freeze the salaries of some 25,000 employees. The bank says the figure is inaccurate and that it is simply trying to reward hard work.

— Barrie Clement, Labour Editor

Hospital guilty of smear t blunder!

هكذا من الاصل

Hospital guilty of fatal smear test blunders

Cervical smear testing faces a national shake-up after an independent inquiry found "serious failings" in a Kent hospital which had to recall more than 90,000 women for screening.

Glenda Cooper, Social Affairs Correspondent, examines a report which makes uncomfortable reading for the NHS.

A damning report into Britain's biggest smear test scare, where five women are known to have died, has found "serious failings" in the treatment patients received.

Of the 91,000 women who were recalled in February 1996, it was found 1,800 had been given the all-clear when they in fact showed signs of problems, and 333 were found to need urgent treatment. Some of the women needing to be recalled for screening have not yet been found.

Cancer of the cervix is the fifth most common cancer among women. The NHS screening programme was set up in 1988, and women aged between 20 and 64 are called for a cervical smear every three to five years. Since it was set up, deaths have fallen by a third.

But the independent inquiry found the screening process at Kent and Canterbury Hospitals NHS Trust was characterised by poor and confused management, understaffing, poor training and breakdown in working relationships.

There also appeared to be a remoteness and lack of interest in the cytology screening programme by its consultants and the inquiry also said there was no clear line of accountability. It disclosed that repeated warnings about the problems had gone un-noticed for several years.

No disciplinary action has been taken against any staff.

An independent inquiry was ordered after an internal report played down the number of women affected, and in the inquiry's words, was "disingenuous" and "economical with the truth".

"I have been forcibly struck ... by the different ways in which the introduction of the internal market ... exacerbated an already weak situation," said Sir William Wells, chairman of the South Thames NHS Region, who headed the inquiry.

No clinical director of

pathology was appointed for two and a half years, and the review team concluded that this was because the Trust was determined to recruit the clinical director at nearby Thanet to improve their competitive position. And when a letter from Director Healthcare NHS Trust raised a number of concerns, it was dismissed as part as a long-running "turf war".

The report called for a shake up of the NHS cervical screening programmes. It demanded improvements in standards and quality control and the introduction of new national guidelines for inquiries and re-screening exercises.

In response, the Government promised swift action. The health minister Baroness Jay said: "I am dismayed by the litany of management weaknesses, unheeded warnings and poor quality control systems detailed in the report. The failures in the cervical screening service were completely unacceptable."

She said that, at a national level, the issues raised had to be considered "very carefully".

Kent and Canterbury hospital yesterday welcomed Sir William's review, describing it as "fair and accurate", and apologised again to the women and families involved.

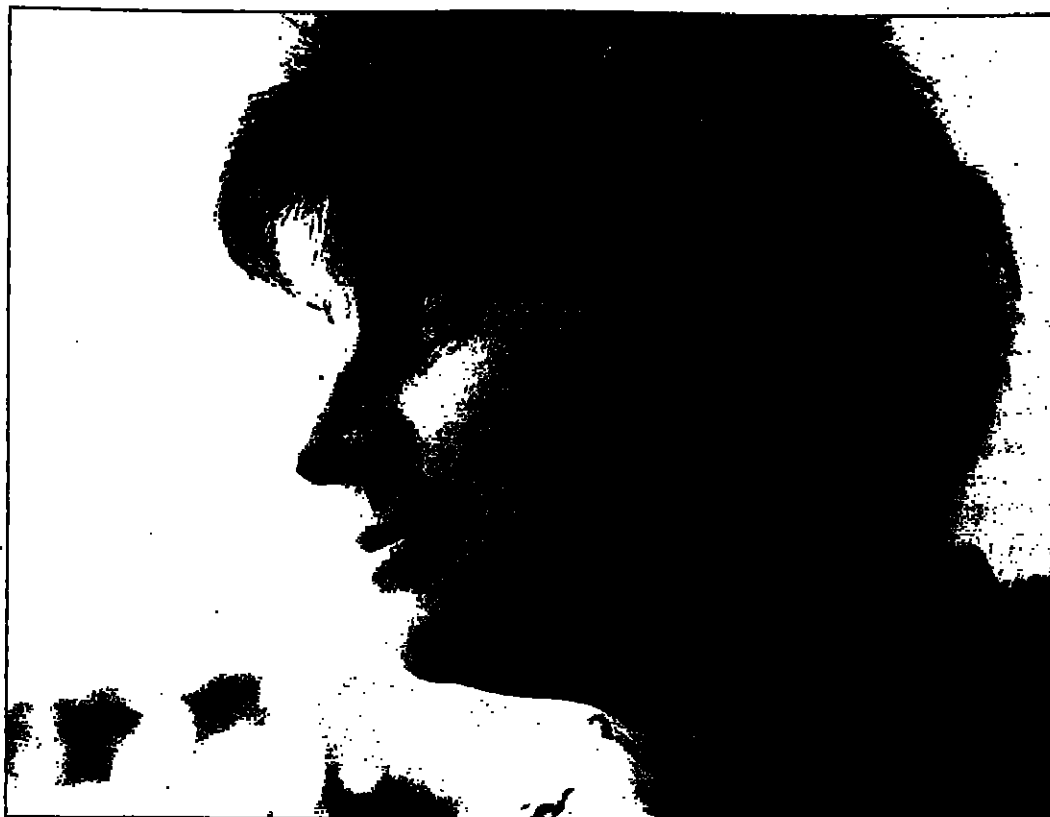
To make sure there are no further errors, women who had smear tests at the hospital between January and May 1996 are to be re-screened.

Sarah Harman, a solicitor and the sister of the Secretary of State for Social Security, Harriet Harman, is co-ordinating claims by more than 70 women. She said that the full extent of the misreporting would never be known. Many women had been seriously damaged, but were having to take the cases to court because the hospital had not admitted liability.

"This is not just a legal matter but a moral matter," she added. "It has been a disaster for women's health." Of the 333 "high risk" women, 10 have not been traced. The hospital has admitted liability in three of the five deaths under investigation and has admitted misreporting in 25 cases.

Of the three consultants involved, two no longer work for the NHS. Concerns about their performance have been referred to the Royal College of Pathologists and the General Medical Council. The trust chairman, James Bird, took early retirement in June and the chief executive, Edward Pearson, stepped down at the same time.

Calpol dangers, page 16



Compensation fight: Helen Palmer, who was diagnosed with cancer at 33 Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

'I was 33. I didn't expect to be told I had cancer'

"I went for my smears as I was told to and when I was told to and they were reported OK," says Helen Palmer. "Now they say they're not responsible. So who else is responsible?"

Helen was only 33 when her cervical cancer was diagnosed. She had gone for smears in 1989 and 1990. Neither had thrown up anything untoward.

She had had two children - Liam, now aged 5, and Hannah, now aged 3, and so in December 1995 she went to see a gynaecologist about being sterilised. It was only then that a test revealed the cancer.

"That was a Wednesday. On the Saturday I got a letter saying it was urgent and they arranged another appointment," she said. "I was devastated. I was only 33 and didn't expect to be told that I had cancer. It was so difficult for me and my husband. We had been considering whether not to have any more children but that decision was taken away from us."

"My husband and I had our own fears that we couldn't discuss with one another."

er. I didn't want to die. I had two small children that I wanted to see grow up. I had to live for my kids. It sounds dramatic to say it but it just didn't seem right.

After biopsies confirmed the cancerous cells, Helen had the tumour removed and a full hysterectomy. "I was in shock because it all happened so quickly."

The two smears which had been seen as normal were re-screened. One was found to be highly abnormal, the other severely abnormal. "It was bad enough, but to be told it could have been picked up in the first place was terrible."

Kent and Canterbury have denied liability so far in Helen's case, because she was referred to Margate Hospital for her hysterectomy. "But if they are not responsible, who is?" she says.

She still has check-ups every three months, but is well at the moment. "The week before I go I can't sleep because I'm thinking what they are going to say - is the cancer going to have come back?"

— Glenda Cooper

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A flow of good ideas.

Schools and local education authorities in deprived areas will no longer be able to plead poverty as an excuse for low achievement, Stephen Byers, the schools minister, said yesterday. Judith Judd, Education Editor, reports on the latest initiative to raise standards.

Authorities are being given a proposed range for their targets. North Tyneside, at present at 63 per cent, must aim for be-

The Secretary of State for Education will have power to veto plans which do not offer sufficient

He welcomed the plan: "It is essential we get up to 70 percent. We want to be in the 90s. Our young people have to be able to compete with the rest of Europe."



Two weeks ago, a sixth-form student died falling from a diving board at King's School, Ely.

Mr Prescott is still keen on changing the Treasury rules so that any borrowing by London Underground would not be in-

It is understood that the report assumes an increase in passenger numbers and fare rises of 1 per cent above inflation. It adds that if companies took a

Ministers are aware that privatisation of the Tube is a political bomb. Sir George Young, the former transport secretary, privately told senior Tube managers that the Conservatives had got the sell-off "wrong".

This week's poems come from *Poets on Poets*, edited by Nick Rennison and Michael Schmidt (£9.95). In this 400-page anthology produced by Carcanet Press in association with Waterstone's, almost 100 modern poets present work from poets of the past. Emma Lazarus's poem (part of which adorns the Statue of Liberty) appears in a 19th-century American section selected by CK Williams.

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Happy? No, they're just drinking to forget the angst and confusion brought on by the existential ills facing the modern male ...

Nineties Man is angst-ridden, confused and selfish. According to marketing experts, "New Man" is a figment of female imagination, while "New Lad" is a cop-out. Kathy Marks charts a dismal diagnosis of the existential ills of the modern male.

It was so simple a few decades ago. Men were men, and the world was constructed in such a way that they never doubted it. The institutions of state, family and work combined to create and nurture their masculine identity.

Massive social and economic changes since the 1960s have played havoc with the old certainties, shattering men's confidence and leaving them fumbling for a sense of self.

This is the dire picture painted by Chad Wollen, an analyst at the Henley Centre for Forecasting. Men are doomed, Mr Wollen told a conference organised by Channel 4, unless they emulate women and learn to cope with an insecure and volatile world. In earlier times, men knew exactly why they existed: to impregnate their wives, bring home the money and protect their families. But all three functions have been profoundly undermined.

Pity the Nineties Man who derives self-esteem from being the breadwinner. Nearly 70 per cent of women aged 20 to 59 now work. In their procreational capacity, too, men are far from indispensable, given the latest advances in reproductive science (not to mention falling sperm counts). As for the strong figure protecting his family from danger - research

by the Henley Centre shows that men are increasingly fearful about their own safety.

The institutions which reinforced the classic male image have disintegrated, Mr Wollen argued. The job for life, the traditional family and the paternalistic state no longer exist. In their place are far more fluid and unpredictable structures.

How then, does modern man handle his identity crisis? Does he rise to the challenge, seek fresh roles, adapt to a shifting society? No, he buries his head, ostrich-like, and pretends that it will all go away.

Day to day, he relies on Nineties Woman to pick up the pieces. "Women are now looking after families, jobs, and - most importantly for men - men," said Mr Wollen.

Alternatively, the contemporary male buys his way out of responsibilities. If his wife is not around to cook, he orders in a pizza. If there is housework or childcare to be dealt with, he engages domestic help and nannies.

More and more, he seeks relief from stress through drink and drugs. "Nineties Man is trying to pretend that the world hasn't changed," Mr Wollen said. "When all else fails, he goes out for a beer."

He dismissed New Man - the caring, sharing, nappy-changing 1980s male - as a product of wishful female thinking, and poured scorn on New Lad - the football, sex and booze-obsessed 1990s man - as a puerile backlash.

"Men are regressing to a time when the old stereotypes still held true. The Lad is an incredibly powerful image, but it's not an adult response. Men have to learn about flexibility and uncertainty. They have to understand that they can't be masters of the universe."



Keeping up appearances: For all his bravado, experts believe that Nineties Man may be suffering a unprecedented identity crisis stemming from the demise of traditional certainties

WHICH TYPE OF NINETIES MAN ARE YOU?

Sean Kelleher, business development manager at Channel 4, has identified five "social stereotypes".

Nathan: Aged 15-34, mainly from ABC1 class. Appearance is important to Nathan; he enjoys spending money on clothes and skin-care products. He goes out to clubs and wine bars, and is athletic and sporty. Nathan's body is a temple. He regards cooking as a chore, likes eating out in ethnic restaurants and drinks strong beers and lagers such as Lowenbrau. He loves hi-tech gadgets and computers, watches *ER* and *Brookside*, and is bad at managing money.

Dave: Mainly 15-34, with a C2DE bias. Dave is more settled, likes his home comforts and spends a lot of time on the sofa, particular when there is football or wrestling on the television. He wears designer labels, shops at Sainsbury's and avoids health foods. Dave enjoys a night out in the pub, drinks lagers such as Labatts and believes that real men should down numerous pints at one sitting. He goes to dog races and plans to buy a satellite dish next year.

Mark: Mainly 35-54, with an ABC1 bias. Mark is self-assured and confident, a top earner and a National Lottery enthusiast. He knows what he wants out of life and works hard to achieve it. He has staid tastes in fashion, plays squash or badminton once a week and drives a family saloon car. Mark enjoys food, sometimes to the point of over-indulgence, and drinks French imported beers. He watches *The Gilt Show* and probably has a pension.

Brian: Mainly aged 35-54, C2DE class. Brian has "downmarket" cultural tastes. He watches a lot of television, particularly Sky football, and reads newspapers to keep up with showbusiness gossip rather than world affairs. He likes expensive aftershaves, takeaway meals and gadgets. Brian goes on package holidays and when abroad, wants only to eat, drink and lie in the sun. He despises vegetarians and believes low-alcohol lager is not a man's drink.

Philip: Aged 55 plus, mainly ABC1. Philip wants to be a Nineties Man, but has deeply-rooted traditional male values. He loves fine wines and gardening, and reads the financial pages to keep tabs on his investments. He takes holidays in Europe, buys organic produce and may be a vegetarian. He exercises by taking long walks, is not obsessed with his appearance and is financially sophisticated. He is a homebird who drinks beers such as Theakstons.

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Milosevic foe ignites Montenegro's hopes of freedom

The election of one of Slobodan Milosevic's staunchest critics as president of Montenegro is the latest setbacks for the Balkan strongman. Andrew Gumbel says Milo Djukanovic's victory could prove to be a slow-burning fuse under the Milosevic power machine.

It would be wrong to see Milo Djukanovic as a knight in white shining armour. He owes his brief but glittering career to the man he now professes to hate, Slobodan Milosevic. Until recently he was the protégé, not the rival, of the man he beat in Sunday's presidential election, the outgoing head of state, Momir Bulatovic.

But in the ever-shifting sands of Balkan politics, Mr Djukanovic's election is a milestone. Ever since the pro-democracy street protests in Belgrade last winter, the 35-year-old economist and outgoing prime minister has emerged as a frank critic of Mr Milosevic and his autocratic, opportunistic leadership style.

Over the past year almost every significant post in the tiny republic of Montenegro has been given to men who support economic and political reform intended, above all, to end the isolation into which Mr Milosevic had dragged Montenegro through his initiation of the wars of Yugoslav secession.

Sanctions and a perceived pro-Serbian bias in the politics of the two republics caused economic disaster for Montenegro. The potentially lucrative port of Bar is idle, the beautiful coast unexploited, and state salaries - the mainstay of most families - have slumped. In such a climate Mr Djukanovic's call for change has been persuasive.

The presidency was the only prize that still eluded the reformist camp and that has now been clinched, though by the narrowest of margins. Mr Djukanovic failed to win the first round against Mr Bulatovic, and won the second by 7,000 votes. That might seem a tentative platform for change, especially since Montenegro's population is 650,000, against more than 10 million in Serbia,

but Mr Djukanovic has got the outside world and the peculiar rules of the rump Yugoslav constitution on his side.

As Montenegrin president he controls half the Yugoslav federal parliament, which can make or break the federal president - nominally an honorific post but occupied by Mr Milosevic. He can prevent Mr Milosevic changing the constitution to bolster his powers and can also pile on pressure to install a reformer in the constitutionally crucial position of federal prime minister.

In the longer term, Mr Djukanovic can press for greater autonomy for Montenegro. A good portion of Montenegrin society looks back fondly to before the First World War, when it was independent. That is an asset Mr Djukanovic is sure to use, even if complete independence appears out of the question for now.

He will have to tread carefully, not least because of the many Montenegrins who voted for Mr Bulatovic in the belief that succumbing to centralised power is more prudent than challenging it. Mr Bulatovic has already begun to dish dirt on his rival, accusing him of organising cigarette-smuggling rackets during the Bosnian war. Mr Djukanovic responded with corruption accusations of his own; there is a danger too much dirty linen washed in public will discredit both men.

Mr Djukanovic will be aided by the confusion racking Serbia itself. Over the past month Mr Milosevic's Socialist Party of Serbia failed to win an outright majority in the Serbian parliament and was unable to rouse the required 50 per cent of the voting public to clinch a result of any kind in Serbia's own presidential election. In both cases, with the pro-democratic opposition boycotting elections altogether, the big winners were the extreme nationalists of the Radical Party and their leader, Vojislav Seselj.

Serbia's political prospects no longer look as rosy as during last winter's liberal-inspired street protests but the same message is still coming through: that Mr Milosevic is in trouble. He may not be about to relinquish power - nobody would dare bet on that any more - but he might be forced to permit the likes of Mr Djukanovic to push through their programme for change.

Belgrade fury at British bid to tackle media bias

Following the shift towards a more ethical foreign policy, British diplomats have helped the media in Belgrade to present a less biased view of the world to Serbs. Their help has a unique technological twist, courtesy of the BBC. Steve Crowshaw reports on a burst of Serb indignation, and a defiant British reaction.

The Serbian government has often sought to make it difficult for independent broadcasters to reach their audience. "Technical failures" tend to be more political than technical. Stations critical of the government find it difficult to get a licence.

Britain has stepped in to help broadcasters sidestep the problems caused by the Belgrade regime. A respected independent radio station, B-92, has begun to receive crucial help - via the BBC, but with the active support of the British government.

Britain has given satellite receivers to a number of radio stations in Serbia, making it possible for them to broadcast B-92's news programmes in different parts of Serbia. Britain's involvement was warmly welcomed by Serb democrats. But the Yugoslav authorities were less keen.

The foreign ministry hauled in the British ambassador, Ivor Roberts, to complain that Britain had breached the rules of the diplomatic bag, by letting

the equipment in. Mr Roberts, who is about to leave Belgrade, appears to have given as good as he got. He threatened retaliation if Serbia blocked the use of the satellite receivers - in other words, if Belgrade sought to prevent B-92 from reaching its intended audience.

He emphasised that Britain was ready to pay customs dues, but indicated that if Belgrade wanted to prohibit the use of the receivers, and thus keep B-92 partly muzzled, then EU economic concessions would be cancelled. At which point, Serbia appears to have decided that it was not worth the fight.

Freedom of the media has become a key issue in Serbia. The dominance of state radio and television means that alternative views are rarely given a fair hearing. There is little press censorship. But a recent report for the European Commission described state television news as "fundamentally flawed" because of its failure to provide balanced coverage of the most important issues.

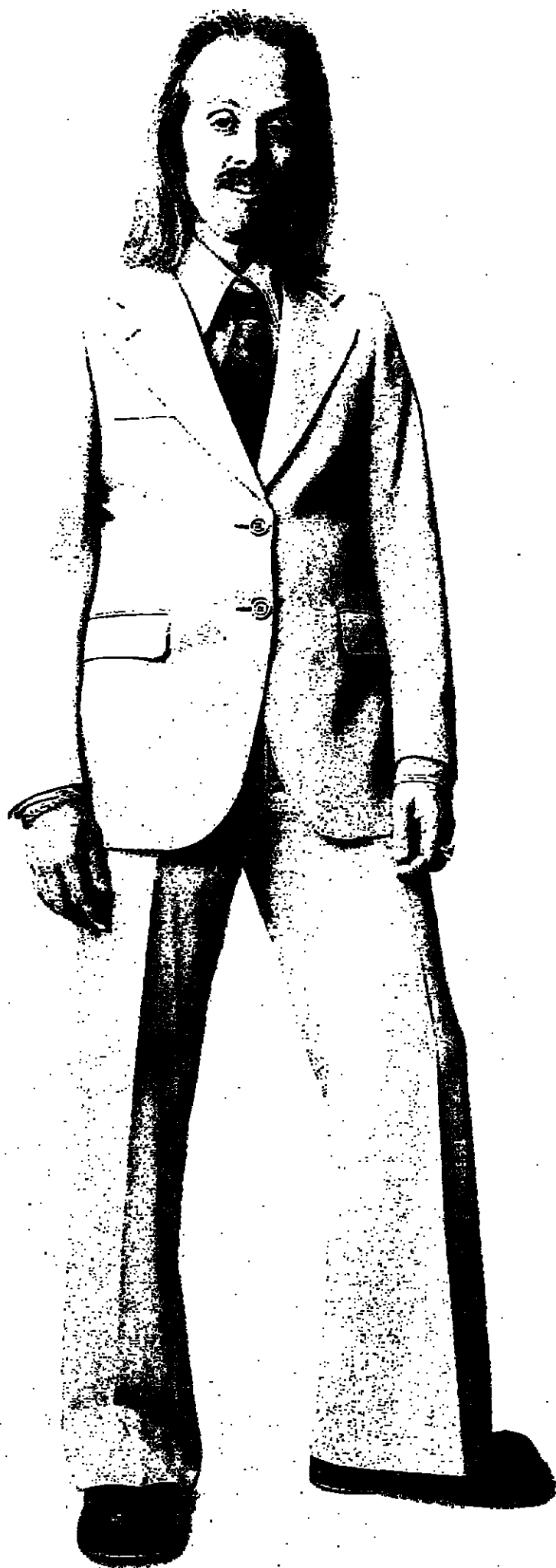
In other respects, too, Britain appears to have got under the skin of the Belgrade regime. In what appears to be part of a campaign, a diplomat at the British embassy has been attacked in the pro-government press. Julian Braithwaite, second secretary, is accused of stirring up trouble in the Albanian-majority region of Kosovo, where basic human rights are ignored. Britain argues that it is interested only in seeking a peaceful resolution to Kosovo's problems. Perhaps coincidentally, Mr Braithwaite's apartment has also been broken into and ransacked.



Milo Djukanovic (centre) and his wife, Lidiya, celebrating his narrow victory in elections for the Montenegrin presidency. The result is particularly significant, as the presidency was the only prize still eluding the reformist camp in the tiny republic.

Photograph: AP

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Gypsies left to face chilly welcome at the cliffs of Dover

The 'Slovak scroungers' had already become the talk of Dover before this weekend's sudden influx created new fears and new shock headlines. But the gypsies are worried, too. Steve Crawshaw hears different views that may prove to be hard to reconcile.

"They spat at me as I came out of the registry office on my wedding day, because I had married a gypsy. People were full of hatred. That's just how it is."

Hana, though not herself a gypsy, is describing the mood back home in the Czech republic, which eventually persuaded her to bring her family to the UK. "For myself, I could get used to it. But my children were made to suffer. And that's what I couldn't stand." In the Czech republic and Slovakia, discrimination against gypsies is part of the daily routine. The New York-based Human Rights Watch talks of "blatant discrimination and violent crimes", which the authorities do little to punish.

A Slovak gypsy in Dover talks of being thrown off buses, with yells from those on the bus of "black-faced mugs". "When people saw the skinheads throwing us out, they were happy. People shouted: 'Go back to India! There's no special bus [for gypsies] - so you always risk being thrown out.' One family now living in Dover was fire-bombed; the daughter's legs are still scarred.

The racism facing the gypsies at home is real. But that does not make things easier for the authorities in Dover. The 150 who suddenly descended on the town over the weekend were only the latest batch to arrive, claiming political asylum. Several hundred arrived in recent months, bringing the total to around 800. Police last night described as "grossly exaggerated" reports that a further 3,000 may still be on their way. Even before this weekend, Kent County Council reckoned that it would have to spend an extra £1m to cope with the new arrivals. The asylum-seekers' families must be housed and educated, paid for by the council.

In at least one case, would-be asylum-seekers signed on in two areas, to gain double benefits. There has been shoplifting, too. Because most of the gypsies are in bed-and-breakfast accommodation, they spend much of their time on the streets.

All of which, combined with suitably lurid headlines, has led to enormous local resentment. A Slovak who has lived in



Home alone: Joseph, 9, a Slovak refugee, waiting in his guest-house accommodation as his father is held at Rochester Detention Centre. Photograph: Brian Harris

Dover for two years says: "It was all nice and calm at the beginning. People used to smile at me when I said I was Slovak. Not any longer." Those who work daily with the gypsies claim that the problems have been blown up out of all proportion. One man who runs a bed-and-breakfast where gypsies have regularly been housed by the council said that "only a tiny minority" caused problems.

In Dover, however, it is difficult to find people who have a warm word to say about the cuckoos in the nest. Typical comments include: "It's disgusting that they're allowed

in," or "The English pay for everything - they get nothing themselves. That's how it is, nowadays." A letter-writer in the *Dover Express* complains: "Chemists are going flat out providing free prescriptions - and they are collected by hands covered in more gold than Tutankhamun."

Paradoxically, the reason that many gypsies give for being in Britain is that they perceive it as a country of great tolerance.

Canada used to be the preferred country of destination - but an enormous influx of asylum-seekers there this summer led to the introduction of visas. Britain may

now follow suit. As described elsewhere on this page, a Czech television programme which quoted enthusiastic gypsies on their reception in the UK helped to trigger a further exodus. After meetings with British officials yesterday, Slovak diplomats said that they would send the message home that gypsies should not come to the UK. But the Slovak government is hardly a neutral player in the whole issue.

There has been little cross-party argument on the issue. Gwyn Prosser, the local Labour MP, has worked hand in hand with the Conservative-led county council

to persuade the Government to come up with more funds. Current legislation means that asylum-seekers are not allowed to move from Dover and the immediate surrounding area while the asylum claim is being considered.

Inflammatory recent reports are condemned by council officials as "unhelpful, to say the least", because of the tensions they have stoked. But the problems do not look set to vanish.

The immigration minister, Mike O'Brien, yesterday sent a tender-but-tough message: "We want genuine refugees

THE LURE OF PROMISED LANDS

The gypsy exodus from the Czech Republic and Slovakia began in earnest in August after the broadcast of a Czech television documentary charting the journey and arrival in Canada of Romany families.

They were shown having picnics, learning to drive and visiting the Niagara Falls. Five thousand gypsies in the Czech Republic were reported to have packed and booked all the flights to Toronto for the next two months.

When Canada looked to be a tougher option - asylum-seekers faced tough questioning and the prospect of months in run-down hostels with no money or work, followed by attacks on hostels by skinheads - the gypsies started to look elsewhere. They started trickling into Dover.

Josef Klima, the journalist behind the Canada documentary, turned his camera on Britain. The 30 September edition of *With Your Own Eyes*, the most popular Czech current-affairs programme, dedicated 20 minutes to looking at the fate of Czech and Slovak gypsies planning to settle in Britain.

It helped prompt the renewed exodus here. But Mr Klima insists he is not "the initiator of this immigration wave or a travel agent masterminding the exodus of gypsies."

"If I hadn't done the documentary it would only mean that the same turn of events would have happened two or three months later. I just speeded things up." The film showed gypsy families searching for others on arrival in Dover and being grilled by immigration officials. Those already in Britain spoke enthusiastically of funds and support they had been given.

Kate O'Brien, Prague

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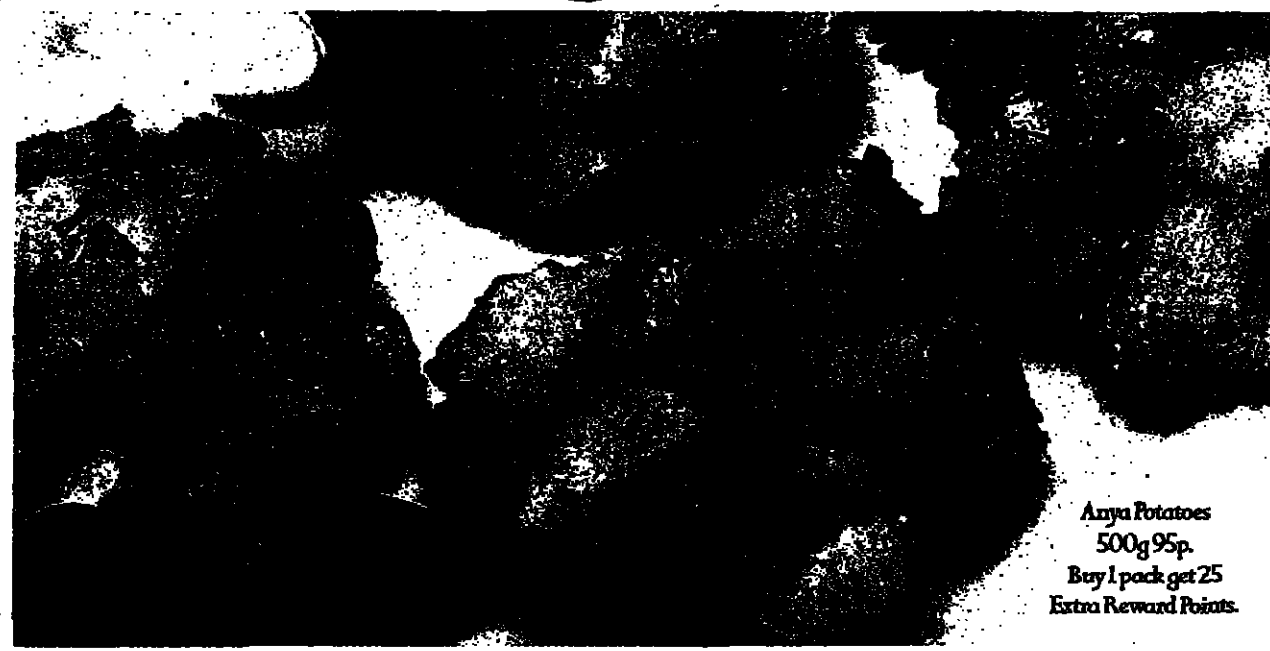


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US welfare reform faces reality test

America's welfare reforms have been hailed as an unalloyed success. But although the number of social security recipients has fallen, Mary Dejevsky in Washington says the press is now turning against the reforms.

The figures seem indisputable. Over the past year the number of people receiving benefits has fallen by 14 per cent nationwide and in many places by much more. Unemployment is at its lowest for a generation, suggesting there is potential for even more to join the procession from welfare to work.

But in the past week the press - including some of the most ardent supporters of the reforms - has been more critical. There are occasions, they have concluded, where hard choices have to be made and the reforms may not work.

For its study the *New York Times* chose the Mississippi Delta, one of the poorest regions in the country, and found withdrawal of state benefits had only a temporary effect. There were not that many jobs available, skilled or unskilled; settlements were dispersed, forcing long commutes. And because existing welfare benefits were among the lowest in the US, withdrawal had only limited punitive effect.

The paper cited a mother who decided distasteful work at a fish plant, inconvenient shift-times, poor pay, an hour-and-a-half commute each way and unreliable childcare made the project unsustainable. It noted that while these poor Mississippi counties might now be the exception, they could rapidly

become the rule if the economy faltered.

The *Washington Post* took the example of a single parent who seemed to justify the reforms. She took subsidised training, found a job, enjoyed it and is off benefits. Which would be a vindication if she did not have a 15-year-old at home who is pregnant with her second child and still at school.

Childcare for two grandchildren would take up more than her total income. Should she throw in the job, throw out her daughter, or take her out of school? If she keeps her job, is she just pushing her daughter into the dependency she escaped? Eventually, it is agreed her daughter should leave school for a year, but this is not what the welfare reforms were supposed to encourage.

The *Wall Street Journal* took New Jersey, where a close race for the governorship prompted the Republican incumbent, Christine Todd Whitman, to say the state is a "national model for its welfare-to-work efforts". But the only thing New Jersey was a national model for, the correspondent said, was "the coast-to-coast hype" surrounding the reforms. He asked whether they had done more than flush out fraudulent claimants, leaving the real problem of poverty untouched.

At the heart of these criticisms are two: the cost of providing training, transport and childcare may exceed the cost of the original benefits, reducing the economic argument to a moral one. But even the moral argument is challenged by those who question the sense of putting a mother of young children to work, especially if childcare is inadequate. Will this help the next generation, they ask, or is trouble being stored up for the future?



Algerian mothers thwarted in search for loved ones

Algerian police yesterday forced dozens of women like the one above, as well as lawyers, to abandon a march to parliament to demand information about people who have disappeared during the civil war. Mothers of the missing rarely

try to publicise their plight. In Algeria, preparing for local elections on Thursday, thousands of people have gone missing since 1992, when violence broke out after authorities cancelled general elections that Islamists were poised to win.

More than 65,000 people have died in the conflict pitting the army against Muslim rebels. The military is accused of many disappearances but the government denies any wrongdoing. The rebels have also been behind many kidnappings.

Uncle Sam, world's dirtiest old man

Figures released yesterday show that the United States - the world's biggest producer of greenhouse gases - increased emissions by 3.4 per cent last year, despite voluntary constraints.

The report, by the Department of Energy, comes less than a week before an expected announcement by President Bill Clinton setting out the official position on curbing greenhouse emissions.

The question of whether the US should sign up to mandatory targets for emissions cuts at the Kyoto conference on global warming in December - and if so what those targets should be - is the subject of fierce debate in Washington.

The Department of Energy said last year's increase in emissions reflected higher than expected economic growth (consuming more energy), an unusually harsh winter, and higher natural-gas prices that encouraged consumers to switch to dirtier forms of energy, including coal.

Supporters of mandatory targets for cutting greenhouse gas emissions used the increase to argue that voluntary targets had not worked. The US has 4 per cent of the world's population, but accounts for 20 per cent of greenhouse emissions.

Figures from the Department of Transport also showed petrol consumption increased in the first half of this year by

almost 2 per cent - caused in part by a switch to bigger cars and by a slight fall in fuel prices. In an observation that will reinforce European calls for the US to accept legally enforceable targets for cutting greenhouse gas emissions, the same report said the fuel efficiency of US cars had not improved since the mid-Eighties.

While fuel consumption is not a big consideration for US car-buyers, the price of petrol is a major political issue and those campaigning against compulsory emissions targets find a receptive audience when they argue that internationally enforceable targets would increase fuel costs.

— Mary Dejevsky, Washington

South Africa reopens file on death of Samora Machel

South Africa has reopened an investigation into the death of Mozambican president Samora Machel in a 1986 plane crash over South Africa, a justice spokesman said yesterday. Torie Pretorius, a member of the investigating team from South Africa attorney general's office, said a decision to reopen the case was made after a meeting between police minister Sydney Mufamadi and Mozambique officials in June.

The Johannesburg daily *Star* newspaper said yesterday new allegations had emerged that Machel, who led Mozambique to independence from Portugal in 1975, was poisoned at the scene of the crash in 1986 by a doctor who later died in a car accident.

South African President Nelson Mandela has vowed to uncover the truth about Machel's death, saying he did not believe the findings of an apartheid-era official inquiry which blamed pilot error.

France denies role in Congo

France denied having intervened in a civil war in the Congo Republic, saying it had played no role in the victory of the new military ruler, Denis Sassou Nguesso. Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine said France's sole goal throughout the four-month war between forces loyal to Mr Sassou and ousted Congolese president Pascal Lissouba was to support a mediation offer by Gabon President Omar Bongo.

France is the former colonial power in the oil-producing state and French energy giant Elf, now private but formerly owned by the French state, is active there.

Kenya told to let party stand

A US diplomat has called on the Kenyan government to register the opposition Safina party to demonstrate its sincerity in carrying out constitutional reforms. Michael Marine, deputy chief of mission at the US embassy in Nairobi, rejected the argument justifying refusal to register the party because it would jeopardise peace and stability.

The US embassy is backing political reforms in Kenya prior to forthcoming general elections but has not specifically endorsed registration of Safina, one of whose founders is the renowned paleontologist, Richard Leakey. All political parties in Kenya must be officially registered, and Safina applied for this status 28 months ago. But two weeks ago, the registrar of societies denied registration on the grounds that the party would be a danger to Kenya and had an "inappropriate" name.

Diplomat and the belly-dancer

It has all the makings of an Egyptian soap opera: sex, politics, intrigue - and a scantily clad belly-dancer. Egypt's ambassador to Israel, Mohammed Bassiouny, has been the talk of the town since allegations surfaced that he sexually assaulted an Israeli belly dancer, identified only as "Aleph". The *Haaretz* newspaper said the ambassador, a former intelligence officer, "ought to have known about the danger of trysts in strange bedrooms where cameras and microphones can easily be hidden".

Last week, the state prosecutor announced that the investigation would be closed for lack of evidence, but the *Masri* newspaper speculated that Mr Bassiouny's term would end within a few months, purportedly "for reasons totally unconnected to the incident".

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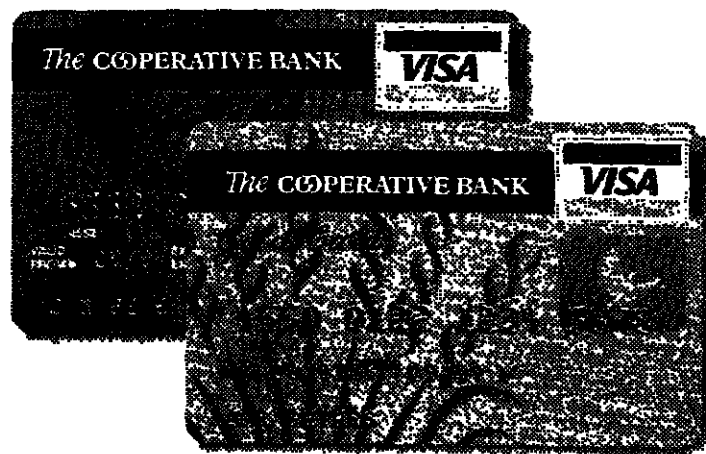
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Too close for comfort: Peking doesn't like the look of films such as (above) *Seven Years in Tibet*, starring Brad Pitt

Cinema audiences kept in the dark about Hollywood's Dalai Lama epics

Films which anger the Chinese authorities are not banned in Hong Kong but are merely not distributed, especially if they are about Tibet, writes Stephen Vines

Three Hollywood films with themes unacceptable to the Chinese government are unlikely to be seen in what has become the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong because distributors have shied away from buying them.

The first, *Seven Years in Tibet*, the controversial story of Heinrich Harrer, who befriended and acted as tutor to the young Dalai Lama, stars Brad Pitt and David Thewlis and makes no secret of its sympathy with the Tibetan people. Neither does *Kundun*, directed by Martin Scorsese, based on the official biography of the Dalai Lama. It has been produced by the

Disney, which was threatened with reprisals by China if it went ahead with the project. It declined to back down and has enlisted the support of Henry Kissinger, former US secretary of state, to try to make peace with Peking.

Seven Years in Tibet has been released in the US and got good reviews, though controversy has arisen over the role of Harrer, who has been revealed as having an active Nazi past; this was enthusiastically reported in the Hong Kong media.

Kundun will be released on Christmas Day in America and could spawn a new generation of Tibetan film-stars, as unknowns from Tibet make up the bulk of the cast.

Red Corner, starring Richard Gere, who is a strong Dalai Lama supporter, is not about Tibet but about the nightmare of an American businessman who becomes entrapped in China's notoriously arbitrary legal system. The female lead is played by

the actress Bai Ling, who fears it may end her career in Chinese films.

Films such as these were freely shown before Hong Kong reverted to Chinese rule but now appear unacceptable to the territory's major distributors, all of which do business in China.

Television companies have also exercised self-censorship in buying programmes seen as critical of the Chinese government.

Under the colonial regime, laws existed to ban films likely to upset the Chinese government, though they were thinly disguised as referring to films likely to endanger relations with neighbouring countries. These laws were rarely used.

However, there has been no need for legal action in this instance, as the distributors have done the Chinese government's work for them. Local human-rights groups have described their action as the worst kind of self-censorship.

We'll do it our way, Tung will tell Britain

Tung Chee-hwa, the former shipping tycoon who replaced Chris Patten as Hong Kong's Chief Executive, is showing remarkable skill in getting the people of the former colony to accept his political agenda. Stephen Vines in Hong Kong says he will be using his visit to Britain, which starts today, to reinforce his authority

Trailing around London, just as Chris Patten used to do, may not seem the most obvious way for Tung Chee-hwa to boost his credentials as a Chinese leader breaking the restraining ropes of colonialism. However, Mr Tung sees it as an opportunity to show Tony Blair - whom he will meet today - that he is not in awe of the former sovereign power.

In nearly every major speech since coming to office on 1 July, Mr Tung has used the phrase "now that we are our own masters" to stress the end of colonial rule and the ascendancy of the new Chinese order.

He talks constantly of "Chinese values" and "our own way of doing things" to emphasise the break with the past. This kind of rhetoric strikes a chord with Hong Kong people who were generally uncomfortable with their role as colonial subjects even though they gave little sign of their objections.

Under the new order, opinion polls show that although most people are happy the colonial era is over, they are worried about the policies of the government. Heading the list of unpopular measures is the scrapping of all tiers of elected government and the installation of a very unpopular non-elected legislature - the president of which, Rita Fan, is compared to Jiang Qing, Chairman Mao's hated wife and the leader of the Gang of Four, which spread havoc throughout China during the Cultural Revolution.

Mr Tung has tried to divert public attention from the issue. "We've had five years of de-

bating about that." Mr Tung recently told a businessmen's meeting, referring to the former governor's democratic reform programme. "Now is the time to get on with livelihood issues."

Presenting himself as a no-nonsense businessman tackling the nuts and bolts of issues affecting people's daily lives, Mr Tung has sidelined the once powerful pro-democracy camp who were kicked out of office and are now portrayed by the Chief Executive's supporters as frustrated malcontents.

The new government has little patience with the views of its opponents, and unlike the publicity-obsessed Patten administration, spends less time trying to put its views across to the public.

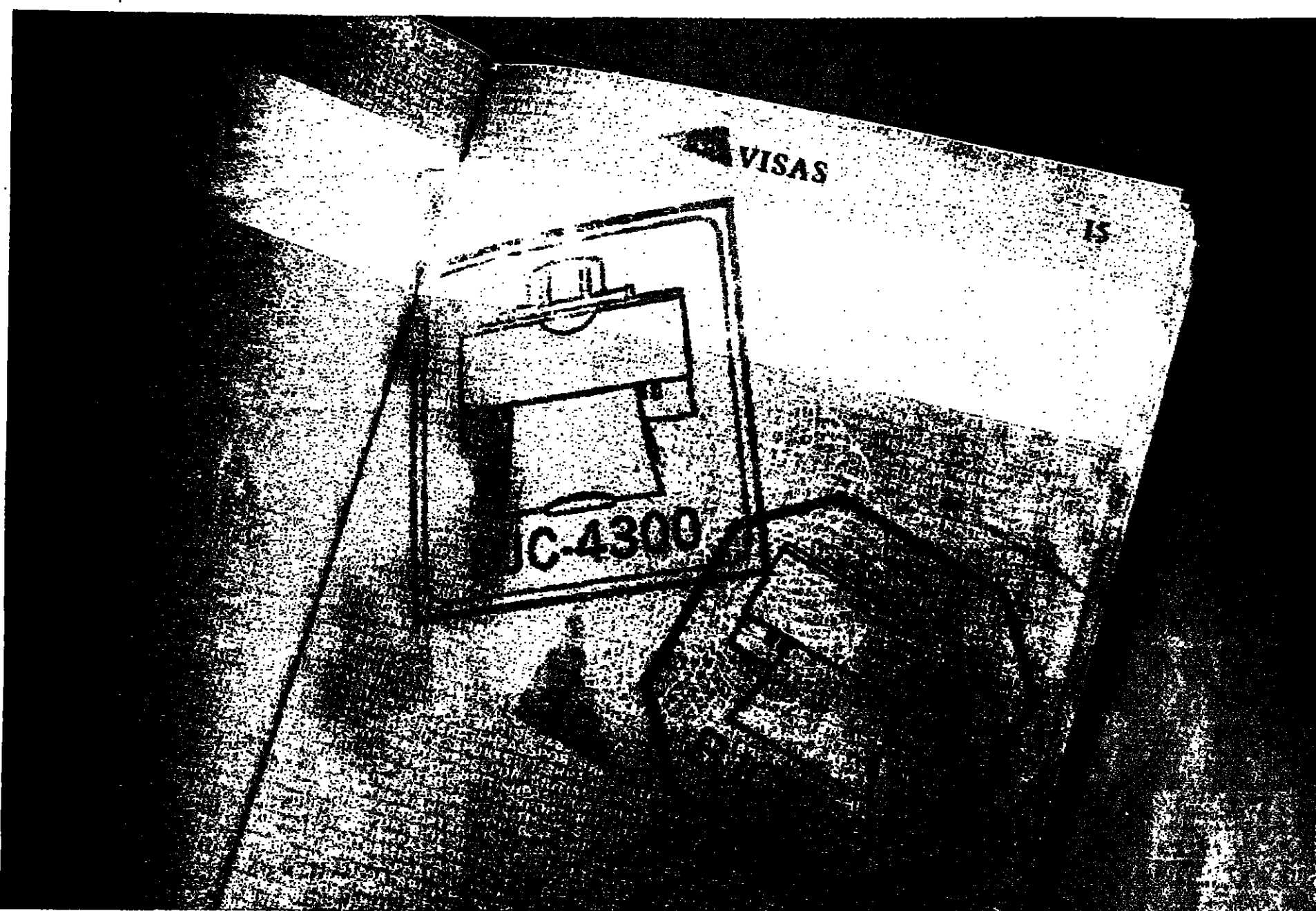
Mr Tung's approval ratings in the polls remain healthy. He comes across as avuncular and is always ready to flash a warm smile, though he seems determined to address most questions with platitudes that irritate a growing number of critics.

China is clearly pleased by the performance of the man they earmarked for leadership of the new Hong Kong. Everyone in the Chinese leadership from President Jiang Zemin down has pledged personal support for Mr Tung and stressed he remains fully in charge.

Talk of Mr Tung as Peking's puppet has given way to a realisation that he is nothing of the kind, because he needs no guiding hand from up north. His views and those of the Chinese leadership are, in any case, virtually identical on most Hong Kong issues to those of President Jiang and his colleagues.

Mr Tung proudly says nothing has changed in the new Hong Kong; it is business as usual. However, things are changing, and often in surprising ways. A sign was the way the Chief Executive, a self-proclaimed believer in free markets, littered his first major policy speech with proposals for government regulations of every description. China says it is developing a market economy with socialist characteristics. Hong Kong appears to be acquiring Socialist characteristics to run its market economy.

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LIFE UNDER THE NEW REGIME

What has changed since the handover

- Elected government: All tiers of elected government were scrapped and replaced by appointed bodies, although at local level elected representatives remained in office, in addition to new appointees.
- Press freedoms: No changes to the law, though new laws on sedition have put into question reporting on matters which China sees as posing a threat to state interests.
- The judiciary: The installation of a new Chief Justice was welcomed by both critics and friends of the new government. The courts still appear willing to make rulings contrary to government wishes.
- Freedom of assembly: New laws have been introduced to curtail freedom of assembly but they have not been used as yet.
- Educational systems: No radical overhaul but revisions have been made to the history syllabus, eliminating references to the Tiananmen Square massacre.
- Freedom of movement: No change.
- The stock market and other financial markets: Not even the Chinese government would dare mess with the pivotal centres of Hong Kong life.

When your baby starts crying, don't reach for that teaspoon

Pain-killers in child dosage are a godsend for quelling vague complaints of 'headache' or 'tummyache' that are clearly not too serious. But, Nigel Howard asks, are we creating a generation of drug-dependent children?

"Mummy, I don't feel well." Familiar words which stop a busy parent in her tracks. You touch her forehead: a little warm, maybe, but certainly not feverish. Maybe she just doesn't fancy school? Perhaps a cold is on the way? Or is she just tired and emotional? Whatever the reason, she's insisting that her throat/tummy/head hurts. You reach for the Calpol.

It is a scene played out daily in homes across the country. For years, liquid paracetamol preparations, of which Calpol is the market leader, have come to the aid of desperate parents. When a child has a fever or an ear infection, for example, these medicines can seem like little short of a miracle, rapidly lowering temperature and easing distressing aches and pains.

But do parents now reach for the Calpol a little too often - for when a child is miserable or difficult, or has a mild headache or cold, rather than when he or she is ill? New medical research shows this fear may be well-founded: and that paracetamol, if given too frequently to children, can cause more problems than it solves.

Darren was six years old when he started complaining of regular headaches. At first they came on only once every couple of weeks or so but gradually the frequency increased. His mother gave him liquid paracetamol each time and was always careful never to exceed the stated maximum dose. It seemed to work: the headache disappeared, but it always came back. Eventually, Darren was suffering a headache five or six days a week and his increasingly anxious mother was treating each one with one or two doses of the medicine.

Darren's GP could find nothing physically wrong with him and referred the little boy to the nearby Hartlepool General Hospital where Dr David Symon, a consultant paediatrician, has a special interest in childhood headaches.

Darren is one of 12 local children treated in recent months by Dr Symon for severe, frequent headaches. All the children were taking a liquid paracetamol preparation or a similar painkiller for every headache and eight children were being given a pain-killer every day.



That'll make it better, but will the cumulative effects of child pain-killers given too readily simply make matters worse?

Photograph: Tom Pilsten

headaches, although they still experienced the occasional migraine. The remaining four children suffered fewer headaches after their pain-killers were withdrawn. Three were referred for psychiatric help and two of these were then cured of their headaches completely.

Dr Symon says: "Our biggest problem in treating these children is often the parents. They tend to be the more anxious sort of parent, the sort who are very concerned to do something. They get very upset when we say we need to withdraw their child's pain-killer. Their response is 'How can we leave him or her without treatment? How can we let them go through this suffering?' We have to persuade them that it will be all right, that the pain-killer is actually the problem."

Research has already shown that too frequent use of pain-killers can cause headaches in adults. But Dr Symon believes that recurrent headache in children as a result of too frequent use of pain-killers is a common problem and that the children he sees are merely the tip of a very large iceberg.

He says: "This is an area which has not been studied to any real extent so there is little hard data to go on. However, the fact that I, as a general paediatrician, am seeing two such cases a month, indicates that this is quite a common problem. Possibly many of these children never get near a hospital."

"I suspect that part of the problem is that Calpol and similar pain-killers are all available over-the-counter in the chemists' so people do not think of them as real medicines. When I am taking a case history I am frequently told by the parents that the child is not taking any medicines."

"But when I specifically ask about pain-killers, they say 'Oh yes, of course he/she takes pain-killers. I would recommend to parents that, with headache, you should not give your child a painkiller on more than two days a week at most."

"If the child has more than two headaches a week you should be seeking specialist medical help, not giving him or her a pain-killer."

Dr Symon explained to Darren's mother that her son's problem, and that of all the children attending the clinic, was the result of taking pain-killers too often and that the recurrent headaches were not a sign of underlying illness, but drug withdrawal symptoms.

Dr Symon, who presented the findings from his work with Darren and the other children at the annual meeting of the International Headache Society, held recently in Amsterdam, says: "Too frequent use of paracetamol preparations and any other

pain-killer can actually cause recurrent headaches in children."

"Calpol is the most commonly used pain-killer in such cases but that is because it is the brand leader. There are many other pain-killers for children on the market and all can have this effect if they are used too often."

"Children can suddenly start having migraine or tension-type headaches for all sorts of reasons: perhaps because of problems at home or maybe bullying at school. Parents give them Calpol or similar medicine thinking this will help the headache. It does at first, but as the children get more headaches they are given more medicine and next thing you know the withdrawal effect of the drug is causing the headaches."

"Liquid paracetamol is like any other drug. Used correctly it is useful, used excessively or wrongly it causes problems. Calpol is useful for fevers, where it helps bring down the temperature and relieve mild pain, and for headaches as long as it is used infrequently. But when you start taking it virtually every day over a prolonged

period, even if you never exceed the recommended maximum dose on each occasion, you are undoubtedly going to experience problems."

The children attending the clinic were treated by first removing all the pain-killing drugs in order to see whether there was any underlying physical or psychological reason for their headaches. The symptoms of all the children improved almost immediately. Six of the children, including Darren, stopped having headaches completely. Two others stopped suffering daily

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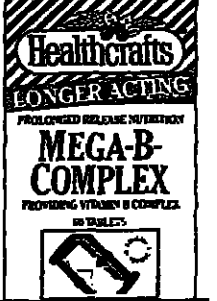
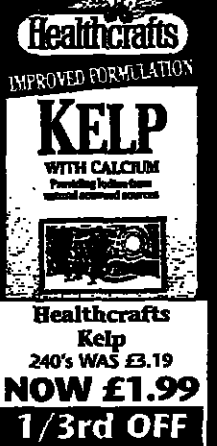
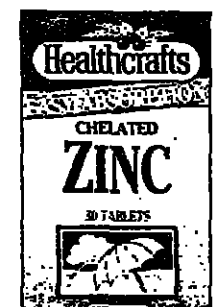
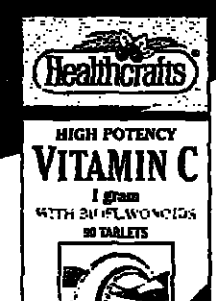
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DR PHIL HAMMOND

There are hundreds of good reasons for males to undergo the snip, aren't there? Name one. Well...

"Now, young man. Just a snip."
"Get out of it!"
"Good God. You're very advanced for a neonate..."
"Advanced enough to know I don't want 20 per cent of my penis skin chopped off. Now clear off."
"But there are lots of good reasons for it..."
"Name one."
"Well, there is evidence that circumcision reduces the risk of urinary tract infections."
"Perhaps. But urine infections in men are rare and it's hardly a justification for mass circumcision."
"OK, smarty pants. What about sexually transmitted diseases. You get less of them without a foreskin."
"Again, that's disputed. A recent American study found that it was circumcised men who got more genital infections, probably because not having a foreskin gave them the false confidence to engage in more risky sexual practices."
"And cancer of the penis?"
"That's less of a risk with circumcision but, again, it's very rare anyway..."
"Ah yes, but very nasty..."
"True, but washing eliminates the extra risk. You don't chop your ear off if it's dirty, you clean it. So why should the foreskin be any different?"
"Because ears serve a useful purpose..."
"And so does the foreskin. It has special nerve endings..."
"Every bit of skin has nerve endings..."
"Yes, but the foreskin hasn't evolved for no reason. And were you going to use any analgesia?"
"Oh no. Your nervous system is not developed enough to feel much pain."
"That's odd. Studies from Toronto have shown that newborns suffer considerable pain during this procedure and that five months later, circumcised boys cry more in response to routine immunisations, suggesting a longer-term effect on pain thresholds."
"Those are just the rantings of the anti-circumcision lobby."
"No. It's the best scientific evidence available. Even Dr TE Wiswell, an eminent advocate of universal circumcision, concluded that doing it without anaesthesia was 'barbaric'."

"OK then, I'll give you some anaesthetic cream."
"I'd take more than that. I'd want to see your audit figures."
"Why?"
"Because I want proof that you know what you're doing..."
"Trust me..."
"That's not enough. My penis is very small and very precious to me. And circumcision is a complex procedure that requires considerable skill. Did you know, the Medical Defence Union has 50 files open on allegations of negligence?"
"Such as?"
"Amputation of the penis, damage to the glans and urethra, haemorrhage, infection, poor cosmetic results - you name it, it's happened."
"Yes, but not often."
"A complication rate of 2-10 per cent is enough for me."
"Yes, but there are complications of keeping your foreskin. It's very common for a boy not to be able to retract it..."
"Yes, and it's very normal as well. Nearly all of them retract with time and virtually none need circumcision."
"What about phimosis?"
"Scarring and stricture are more of a problem, but even then many resolve with time and hydrocortisone cream. I'd really only want a circumcision if it was causing recurrent infections or I developed B.X.O."
"What on earth's that?"
"Balanitis xerotica obliterans. It's a rare auto-immune condition characterised by ivory-white patches on the glans and the only absolute indication for circumcision."
"Well I never..."
"Yes. But on the whole, medical circumcisions are grossly overperformed. They're never justified under the age of three and rarely before five."
"You've certainly done your homework."
"Well, you have to be an informed consumer if you don't want to be a fashion victim."
"Now, run along..."
"I'd love to, but there's the small matter of faith. Your religion demands circumcision."
"Sorry. My nervous system isn't sufficiently developed to understand the concept."
"So that's a definite no?"
"It's a definite maybe. I'll let you know at my bar mitzvah."

VITAL SIGNS

Unwashed breasts are best
New mothers should not wash their breasts too often if they want to keep their babies happy. A study published in *Acta Paediatrica* found that at their first suckling, new-borns much prefer an unwashed breast to a washed one. Breasts treated with the amniotic fluid that surrounds the foetus in the womb, scored even more highly with babies, although by five days this preference had disappeared.

Tooth decay and heart disease linked
Gum disease and tooth decay can seriously increase the risk of stroke, heart attack and pneumonia, according to researchers from Germany and the US. One study involving more than 2,000 patients found that those with gum disease were twice as likely to have a heart attack. Whether gum disease actually causes heart problems is not proven, but one theory is that the bacteria under the gums may enter the blood stream, triggering inflammation in areas such as the lungs and arteries.

Drug-free cure for period pain
Fed-up with taking painkillers for period pain? A new lightweight electronic device, which can be clipped to clothing, is the latest drug-free answer to menstrual discomfort. Priced at £49.95, Femme is a type of TENS (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation) machine connected to self-adhesive pads worn on the lower back. Its makers, Shire Design, claim the tingling sensation it provides can reduce pain.

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Au pair in America — my daughter's ordeal

As a Boston jury hears the harrowing account of the death of a baby in the care of a British au pair, Ben Kingston describes the grim experience of his own daughter. She set out with high hopes and a caring heart and found herself in a situation that too easily could have led to a Louise Woodward-like tragedy.

The trial in Boston, Massachusetts, of Louise Woodward, the British au pair on trial for the murder of a little boy, must send shivers down the spine of hundreds of parents whose daughters are either with American families now, or who may be about to spend a year in America.

In 1993 our own daughter Joanne travelled to Philadelphia at the age of 18 to take up a placement with a family who had an autistic child. In seeking a suitable family to work with for a year, Joanne had specifically asked for a special-needs child, but within days it had become apparent from our telephone conversations with her that far too much was expected of her. However, it was to be some time before the organisers of the scheme took the necessary steps to find her a more suitable family.

For many years Joanne had been involved in a number of local voluntary youth schemes, helping the disabled with swimming, wheelchair dancing at a mental institution, and similar challenging situations. Although at university now, she still travels home on some weekends to work in overnight respite care with some very seriously handicapped children. She appears to have a gift for this work. She was, and still is, planning a "special needs" teaching career, and so she jumped at the opportunity to take a year out after sixth form to work with a special-needs child, and at the same time enjoy some foreign travel. She had seen an advertisement in a local paper for an organisation that specialises in the recruitment of British au pairs, using local agents throughout the UK. Interested girls are interviewed close to their homes, and once they are accepted their details are sent to prospective families in the US. The families then make their choice of applicant, and telephone the prospective au pair.

One evening, soon after Joanne had been interviewed, I took a telephone call from a couple in Pennsylvania. Joanne was away from home that night, and so I had a long talk with both husband and wife, who told me that they had three young children, one of whom was autistic. They seemed like

a respectable family, and the mother explained to me how the help of someone like Joanne would give her the opportunity to devote more time and attention to her other two children.

Within a short time, Joanne was boarding a flight for New York, together with a friend who was taking up a similar position in New Jersey. At the check-in desk at Manchester Airport were a handful of other girls, all eagerly anticipating their year as an au pair. On arrival in New York, all the girls were taken to stay for two nights at a hotel, where they attended briefing sessions, and where they were, in all fairness, made to feel very welcome in the US. From there they dispersed to their various placements, but after less than two days it was very clear that all was not well with Joanne's situation.

It was immediately made clear to her by the family that she was expected to take care of all three children while the parents were out of the house, an event which was a regular occurrence due to the fact that husband and wife were both keen golfers.

The American families themselves can not be absolved from all blame — they are getting child care on the cheap from untrained teenagers

The family had neglected to disclose on their own application form, or to us, that not one, but two of their children suffered from autism to some degree, and they had also withheld the fact that the resultant disruption to the family circumstances had led to severe behavioural problems in the third child.

Joanne did her level best to control the three children during the frequent absence of both parents in those first few days, but it is impossible for one 18-year-old to cope with three such demanding charges, and she felt that the couple were themselves less than supportive. In all such au pair placements, a local counsellor is supposed to be on hand to deal with any problems and to provide a refuge in their own home should an emergency arise. Joanne had spoken to her own counsellor, who had tried to mediate on her behalf, but she had then persuaded Joanne to stay with the family while she sought a replacement au pair for them. The already strained relationship with the family immediately broke

down, and Joanne was in effect cold-showered by them. Her birthday came and went with not so much as a birthday card or comment. From the start she had not been paid the agreed weekly allowance of \$100, and there was frequently insufficient food in the house for her and the three children.

Eventually, when she told her counsellor that she could take no more of it and wanted to get away from the family immediately, the lady in question told her that she could do nothing for a further two weeks, since she was going on holiday. The counsellor had been away for just a short time when we took matters into our own hands. Calls to the au pair agency had proved fruitless, but as luck would have it, their local representative, who had recruited Joanne, had a daughter who lived nearby in Pennsylvania. Mercifully, she took Joanne into her own home to stay until the counsellor returned from holiday.

Eventually, Joanne was placed with a new family with one child in New York, and she proceeded to enjoy working for a year with someone who appreciated her efforts, and with whom she was very contented. However, we cannot help but consider how much worse things could have been had something serious happened when Joanne was living with the first family, particularly after they had become so hostile.

While in New York she met other au pairs, with whom she became very friendly. One, a Swedish girl recruited by the same agency, was expected to cope with 10-month-old twins, even after she had sprained her ankle, and Joanne frequently helped her during her own free time. Of course, every au pair in trouble has the option of returning home, but that would mean the forfeit of a large sum, plus the expense of a flight home.

No one can know at this stage whether Louise Woodward is guilty or not, but some responsibility must lie with such organisations, who place totally inexperienced young girls in this kind of situation with the minimum of instruction. Nor can the American families themselves be absolved of all blame — they must know that they are getting child care on the cheap from untrained teenagers. They must be aware that they are not leaving their children in the reliable hands of a trained nanny, with all that that implies. These girls are au pairs, who are supposed to be treated as guests of the family, not as the hired help.

We are thankful that eventually our own daughter had such an enjoyable time in America, with a family who were reasonable towards her, (and who were also very generous). She has had a unique opportunity to experience a different culture at an early age, but we are acutely aware that it could have easily ended so much differently.



Part of the family? Many au pairs are expected to do too much and receive little support. Photograph: Andrew Burman

On the other side of the world my grandfather was dying, but I had to do my job



PHOTOGRAPH © CHRIS WATT

REVELATIONS

THE TIME: 1994
THE PLACE: London
THE WOMAN:
Vanessa-Mae, teenage
violin virtuoso

My grandfather, Tan Lip Kee, lived in Singapore. As his only grandchild we were close; even though he couldn't speak very much English and my Chinese isn't too good, we still managed to get along.

In a way, I think he was a little bit disappointed with me. He thought I didn't know enough of my Chinese roots because I had grown up as a very Western little girl, living in London for most of my life. At the bottom of his heart he couldn't really understand what I did. He didn't know why I wanted to make violin playing my pro-

fession and he was concerned for my future.

By the time I was 15, he was suffering from cancer. One day we received a call telling us that he was very ill. My mother flew out to Singapore, but I had been booked to do a show in the evening. All through my life, my mother and father had said you must do your job and do it to the end. It's that professional thing and I learned to take great pride in what I did.

That night was to be a big performance. Children in Need had asked me to perform my Toccata and Fugue for the first time on TV, so although I was upset about my grandfather, I had to do my job. The music seemed to lift my emotions, but at the back of my mind I was thinking about grandfather dying in Singapore.

Around that time, I started trying to assert my independence. When you are 15, you want to take more responsibility for yourself and be grown up.

One of the things I started doing was looking after my own passport. Now, other people look after it for me because I go to so many different countries, but then I kept it at the bottom of a cupboard in my bedroom.

When I finished the show, I went home intent on picking up the passport and flying out to be with my grandfather. When I got in, I went to the cupboard and found it wasn't there. I turned my bedroom upside down looking for it, but still couldn't find it. Eventually, it turned up, but by then it was too late because he had already passed away.

I felt very guilty about that night, especially because I had let myself down by not finding the passport. Since then I've learnt how to deal with responsibility, whether it's on an emotional level or on a professional level. Silly things like

being in control of your own passport are not important, and learning to delegate has helped me personally and improved my work. But I wish my grandfather could have seen the last three years of my life. He would have seen that the violin is an instrument that can reach out to touch people and give them some sort of joy.

About a year ago, memories of that time came flooding back. A girl close to my family, who I had known since I was 11, was killed in a car crash. It was shocking because she was only in her early 20s and she had always been so vivacious and full of life. About an hour before I was due to go on stage, my mother told me the news, but at that stage it was too late to pull out of the concert. When I went on, I dedicated my performance to her memory.

Music is such an emotional thing. On that night I used my emotions and my sadness to give

a better performance. Sometimes when you hear sad news, you want to rush away and be on your own. But sometimes, thinking about that person and dedicating a performance to them is more important than being silent because you celebrate their memory.

I take my music very seriously, it is my work. But at the end of the day, relationships with family and friends are really, really important things which can never be replaced by success or fame or anything material. I've learnt that when you work hard, you can treat life too seriously. Life can end at any moment, so you should be with people that are close to you and who make you happy. If I manage to live my life like that it will be cool by me.

Interview by Nicole Yeash

Vanessa Mac's album 'Storm' is released on 27 October.

'I'm not going to read that, Mummy — it's boring'

A surprising number of bright children, exposed to books from babyhood, seem to prefer comics. Why? Is it because their parents have pushed them too hard? Or have they been given the wrong books? Diana Appleyard decided to find out.

"Come and look at this lovely book all about chickens," I say pleadingly to my four-year-old daughter, who is visible only as a pair of scuffed blue shoes, sticking out of the Wendy house my local book shop so thoughtfully provides. "No. I'm playing with my Barbie," says the determined voice that comes with the feet. In a choice between books and Barbie, the fluorescent-pink-knickered wonder will win every time.

Like every other parent, I am passionate about making my children passionate about books. The first thing I bought both of them when they were born were book-cases, which I set about filling with all the books I'd loved as a child — *Winnie the Pooh*, *Wind in the Willows*, the "Jill" pony books and the Mallory Towers series. As soon as they were big enough to prop upright, I read them stories every night.

Did it work? The hell it did. In bookshops, I drive my eldest daughter mad by

plucking titles off the shelves and saying, "Wow! *Susannah of the Yukon!* I loved this when I was your age!" "Boring," she says with all the hauteur a nine-year-old can muster, and veers off to pick up a large comic book which features a green man dripping in gore on the cover, with an expletive such as "Urghhh" coming out of his mouth. "Cool," says Beth, and then we have an unseemly wrestle featuring the words "pocket money" and "rubbish".

Meanwhile, as I'm trying to steer my four-year-old towards *Spot the Dog* and *Kipper*, she picks up a closely-worded text-book about dinosaurs and seems absorbed.

Do they not know what is good for them? Where did I go wrong?

"Stop interfering," says David Fickling, editorial director of Scholastic Children's Books. "Parents can end up subverting children's natural acquisition of language by forcing books on them."

Whose side is he on? The children's,

of course. "Literature is all about ease of access," he says. "We've forgotten what it's like to be a child, and what is easily accessible at six. If you give them something they find difficult to read you can close the door in their face."

He also says that children inherently distrust anything we recommend to them. "Children suss that we have an in-built censorship. They know they don't get the full monty from their parents, so other children are far more influential. If a friend says 'Read this, it's great', they will. If we say it, they won't."

The latest move in my campaign came this last weekend, by taking them to the children's book bazaar at the Cheltenham Literary Festival. "Don't tell them it's about books," advised David Fickling. So off we trotted, telling my four-year-old we were going to the pictures.

Our first port of call was a talk by Nick Butterworth, who writes the lovely "Percy

the Park Keeper" stories. He strode on to the stage like an overgrown child, and made an immediate connection with all the children, pretending to be a bad magician, telling anecdotes about sore tummies and yucky medicines, acting out and drawing from his new book, *Thud*. Charlotte, my four-year-old, sat there rapt throughout, and squealed with glee when Percy himself made an appearance. She got to shake his hand, but she carefully explained to me that the real Percy was inside the costume. Ah-hah.

From there it was the *Jemima Puddle-Duck* Puppet Show. I thought children raised on a diet of Disney videos and *Cartoon Network* would find a puppet show boring. I couldn't have been more wrong: Charlotte sat riveted to the floor, belting out "It's behind you!" and "There he is!"

We rushed back to see a *Spot the Dog* film-show, and then *Charlie's Birthday Party*. This featured a man dressed up as

Willy Wonka reading a previously unpublished chapter from *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl.

Then there was a quiz, which Beth and I cheated at but still didn't win. This went over Charlotte's head a bit, but it was OK because a woman at the front kept throwing chocolates into the audience.

Finally we saw Roger McGough, who read some of his latest poems. I thought it was great, and snuffed and snorted away to myself, but even Beth found the language too hard to understand. Charlotte spent half-an-hour trying to get a bit of old chewing-gum off the carpet, and then ate it.

But all in all it was a highly enjoyable day, and next year I'm going to take them for both of the weekends featuring the children's events. What lucky children I have.

"Well," I said, aglow with virtue at the literature-soaked day my children had enjoyed. "What did you like best, Charlotte?" "The lady throwin' the sweets," she said.

When the palpable meets the impalpable

Question: how do you know when a painting is a piece of Symbolist art?
Answer: when it doesn't look as if it's turned out quite right.
So what have the Pre-Raphaelites done to deserve being renamed by the Tate?

Towards the end of Mike Leigh's play, *Abigail's Party*, Laurence (Bev's husband) makes a last, hopeless attempt to raise the tone. He tries to talk about Van Gogh. "They called him a Post-Impressionist," he announces, trembling, as the evening disintegrates, "but to my mind he was more of a Symbolist." No response from anyone. Then he puts Beethoven's Fifth on the turntable and has a heart attack.

He had a point. But it's a trick you can try on almost every late 19th-century artist. Symbolism, big S, is the broadest and loosest of art phenomena. It easily encompasses Gauguin and Klimt and Munch, Gustave Moreau, Ferdinand Hodler, Arnold Böcklin and many Belgian artists. It doesn't mean a style – it covers many styles. It's associated with mythological and fantastic subject matter, but not synonymous. It's defined, above all, by a certain tone: roughly speaking, non-specific spirituality and non-standard eroticism, often combined: an art which strains one way or another for the higher and the inner.

The sense of strain is important. Symbolism seems an odd case, an art movement that has almost no completely successful examples. But expressive awkwardness isn't just Symbolism's bad luck, it's another of its defining features. There has to be something excessive or something unresolved for a work to qualify properly, a feeling that the art can't quite bring off its transcendental aspirations or can't quite deal

BY TOM LUBBOCK

with the psychic forces behind it. (Therefore Van Gogh generally isn't included.) And that, naturally, is what makes Symbolism so interesting – far more interesting, say, to be a Symbolist than a mere Pre-Raphaelite.

At the Tate Gallery, now, there's a big exhibition called "The Age of Rossetti, Burne-Jones & Watts: Symbolism in Britain 1860-1910". The idea is an up for British art – not just to show our boys as part of this wide European mainstream, but as an original and driving force in it, and what's more as a direct inspiration to some kinds of Modernist art that emerged from Symbolism (early work by Mondrian and Duchamp, for example). I think the case is made, and pictures by European contemporaries are included to help make it. I'm not sure how much it helps the work itself, though. "Justification by influence" is a dogma of art history but, as for what's on show, one of the most persuasive arguments for the Symbolist label is that there's hardly a picture that comes out right. And, putting history aside, what "Symbolism in Britain" offers is a chance to reveal in a collection of bizzarries.

Rossetti, for instance. Everyone, I guess, now sees that his later works, particularly those mean-eyed allegorical female portraits – once thought the epitome of poetical beauty – are up to something extremely rum. Even at the time Holman Hunt found them "remarkable for gross sensuality of a revolting kind", but the word we'd use now is "fetishistic". For the way they dwell so emphatically on individual body parts – the torrents of hair, the gigantic, tumescent necks, the lips that stick to the face like a scarlet mollusc. And, inevitably, the post-Freud viewer wonders if Rossetti really knew what he was doing, and rather hopes he didn't, because an inadvertent giveaway is so much more fun. Well, Rossetti may have lacked the language of



A nice, striking neo-classical album cover: William Blake Richmond's 'Sleep and Death Carrying the Body of Sarpedon into Lycia' Vancouver Museum

psychoanalysis, but it's hard to see how he could have made it clearer.

No, I exaggerate: you can make it clearer. The lips and closed eyelids of Simeon Solomon's *Medusa* are yet more mollusc-like, and the whole face is rendered as a moist, rippling pulp, with the snakes slithering round it like goose-

necks. But what holds you is that still you can't be quite sure how Solomon would have answered the question: so, did you mean to intimate genitals? Beardsley, one feels sure, would have taken the point quite in his stride, and that makes him a less curious artist, case-wise, though a far superior draughtsman.

Conversely, one of the things that makes Burne-Jones look rather pointless in this company is that these thoughts don't seem even to half-cross his mind. He does a four-picture sequence on the *Pygmalion* story, and the interesting business of stone turning to flesh under the sculptor's hand – which is in Ovid and part of the traditional tale – is neatly elided. The statue comes alive in Scene 3 when the sculptor is out of the room, and in Scene 4 he gallantly kneels before her. Or should we see it as a very conscious omission, the reason he does the story in stages? Whichever, the mythological poser – "Did Galatea acquire public hair on animation?" – isn't something Burne-Jones is going to answer.

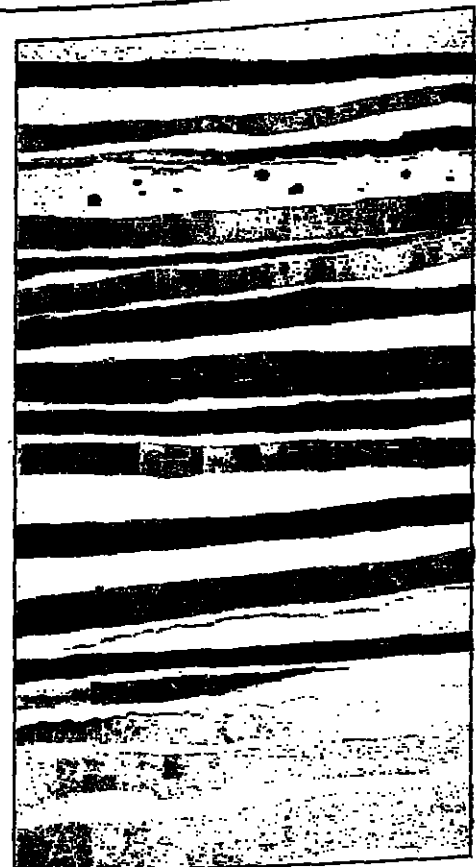
I don't say everything in the exhibition leaves a funny taste. William Blake Richmond's *Sleep and Death Carrying the Body of Sarpedon* is a nice, striking neo-classical album cover. It helps, though. And for staggering awkwardness, it's George Frederick Watts who provides the show's star attraction. Many times I stopped short in front of a picture, open-mouthed, asking: now, who on earth can have done that? It was always Watts. But then, this is Watts's modern fate. Every time his work gets an outing nowadays, people are at first astonished by its vast spiritual and artistic ambition – and then swiftly have to admit that, though a fascinating enterprise, it's a complete disaster.

Watts was never any sort of Pre-Raphaelite. He always set his sights some way beyond the visible world. In the large set-piece pictures of the 1880s – with titles such as *The Dweller in the Innermost*, *She Shall Be Called Woman*, *The All-Pervading*, *The Sower of Systems* – he seems to be trying to create the imagery of some vague, homemade religion. It's a William Blake project, with this big difference: that Blake, by using a flat and iconic language, wisely avoided the issue of what the higher world might look like to the human eye. Watts tackled that head on. He attempted to visualise the ineffable, using grand allegorical figures materialising out of mists and glimmerings.

The results are extraordinary, especially *She Shall Be Called Woman*, but extraordinarily awful. He just can't master the ambiguities he sets himself. He wants the allegory to be clear but the image to be mysterious, and in consequence the palpable and the impalpable get horribly mixed up. The female body rises and dissolves in a murky cloud of vapours, flowers, hair and birds, which turn into a kind of sticky, miasmic fungus around her. The vision becomes physically disturbing, which might be fine in Surrealism and even in Rossetti, but can't be what Watts was after. This picture is one of the exhibition's big candidates for influence: specifically on Mondrian's early triptych *Evolution*, which is in the Mondrian show elsewhere in the Tate. The ascending woman is certainly echoed, and it's not a very happy picture either. But Mondrian has completely cleaned away all Watts's visionary ectoplasmic goo, leaving something more Blake-like and diagrammatic – a much safer approach to the other side.

Watts probably realised that the beyond was beyond him. He once compared himself to a boy "who, being asked by his little sister to draw God, made a great number of circular scribbles, and putting his paper on a soft surface, struck his pencil through the centre, making a great void" – but said that a picture like that would be absurd. A century later, of course, it wouldn't be so absurd, and it's easy to say that Watts should have been, and was on the road to being, an abstract or indeed a conceptual artist (the God-figure in *The Sower of Systems* is very nearly lost in the paint swirls). But these anticipation-gambits always end up a bit patronising. It's better to say that Watts, like so many other artists here, was – with the artistic and intellectual means at his disposal – simply attempting the impossible. We can honour heroic failure in the arts as anywhere else.

'Symbolism in Britain 1860-1910' is at the Tate Gallery, London SW1 (0171-387 8000) to 4 Jun



Text extracted from 'Diary of a Farmer's Wife' by Anne Hughes. Calligraphy by Kirsten Burke

Bar snacks for the reading classes

Text is like food and drink to graphic artist Kirsten Burke. And now, she tells Jennifer Rodger, she's putting her writing on the wall at a bar near you

towards the kitchen." The emotional impact is heightened by Burke's use of blue food colouring to create the vivid coldness of choosing food over passion, while comic-book lettering hints at the image's humorous twist.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the theme of the All Bar One shows is "Food and Drink". But the quotations used have a more general currency, evoking places and feelings that most people will recognise. "The quotes I picked are part amusing and part intense. But, in the end, it must be pleasurable," says Burke, "just like drinking in a bar is."

Small wonder that calligrapher Kirsten Burke chooses to exhibit here. All Bar One is no ordinary drinking establishment. Each branch works to the same basic format: old sprung gym floors, wooden benches, church chairs and cool green interiors create an aesthetic that is at once simple and innovative, a real revolution in bar design. And now Kirsten Burke's calligraphic paintings will be adding their own extra textual dimension to the decor at various All Bar One branches around the country, starting this month at Ludgate Hill.

Burke's exhibition offers a contemporary take on one of the most historic yet still unusual forms of graphic design: decorative lettering. Her work sets out to challenge some of the most common current assumptions about her chosen art form – namely that it's best left to medieval monks, Japanese scribes or greetings card manufacturers.

"There is a hang-up in this country about calligraphy," she says, "because it is so rooted in well-known history, like the scriptures. But that's misleading. My work is modern art. Perhaps that is why America is more open to calligraphy as an art form, because it is a country with less of a history."

It was while studying for a degree in graphic design that Burke found herself floundering between two disciplines: typography and illustration. Accidentally stumbling upon an art review featuring Donald Jackson, calligrapher to the Houses of Parliament, she knew she had found her medium and went on to study calligraphy as a post-graduate.

"I really like the integration between the two areas which I had been studying at the time. It enabled me to make letter-forms into visual images, to be legible in a shared language as well as a visual one. It means that, if one way fails, then there is another way that the picture can communicate. I suppose you could call it abstract art with an explanation."

In her work, Burke combines decorative script with an image that also illustrates her chosen text. One quotation, for example, is taken from Shakespeare's *Othello* – a vitriolic outburst against the "devil" drink: "Drunk? and speak parrot? and squabble? Swagger? Swear?...". Her splattering of shades of red and orange is like the spilling of a glass of red wine in an angry gesture.

Another image offers a blue wash that goes down the page like cold, running water with the words written over it: "I saw him even now going the way of all flesh, that is to say

Some of her chosen texts gain in weight and charm by being placed in this particular context. For example: "Not drunk is he who from the floor can rise and still drink more. But drunk is he who prostrate lies without the power to drink or rise." Literature in bitesized form fits well among people chatting and snacking at the bar and may even become a talking-point. Burke hopes that her work will "inspire people to read".

That's a thought echoed by Jill Hembling, the general manager of the Ludgate All Bar One. "It's something a little bit different and hasn't been done before by us. It will give something back to the regulars and will give people something to talk about or read while they're waiting for a drink or friends."

On picking such an unusual venue, Burke says: "I chose to show my work here as I think it fits well with the looks of All Bar One. The bar has a very minimalist interior, like a gallery, but I can also use the fixtures in the bar to complement my work or hang it on." In fact, her pictures will hang above the punters from the steel-boxed extractor fans and station-clock. "I'm just hoping it doesn't freak out or knock out!" she says.

That's unlikely. Although this is the first time an All Bar One has shown original art, the chain has already held a successful fashion show at its Canary Wharf branch. "Because it is a bar, it avoids the suggestion that you have to be a certain type of person to enjoy looking at art," says Burke.

As Habitat, Paul Smith and countless cute cafés all begin to display original art work, while even poems adorn tube trains, Burke hopes that her exhibition will continue to "promote a friendlier model and up-to-date view of calligraphy and art in general. This exhibition is a bit of an experiment, so it will be interesting to see the response."

So for anyone who still thinks of calligraphy as just something you find on your Certificate of Merit from Sunday school or basket-weaving class, it's high time to think again. And for anyone who still thinks that bars are just in the business of selling booze, watch out: the writing's already on the wall at All Bar One.

Junk lost, treasures found

Robert Rauschenberg and Margaret Mellis use unwanted fragments of their environments in their work ... with very different results, writes Richard Ingleby

However you look at it Robert Rauschenberg has played a major part in the art of the past 30 years. Not just in his native America, but here as well, a living link to Duchamp and his ready-mades, gathering junk from the streets and turning it into paintings and sculpture. He's currently the subject of a vast retrospective across New York (three venues and several hundred exhibits) and a rare commercial show of work made from 1994-1995 at the Bernard Jacobson Gallery in London.

It's good to see his work on this side of the Atlantic, although on the strength of these recent pictures it's hard to see where his importance lies. Like all his work they incorporate found bits and pieces. In this case the pages of catalogues, comics and magazines – "The images that abuse and assault contemporary America," as he puts it, transferred by computer on to canvas and painted over with fine wax.

Some of the titles, like *Treasure* and *Wonder*, suggest that the

assembled bits might, like his silkscreen collages of the Sixties, add up to some sort of whole. One wants them to have a meaning, or at least to tell a story, but they don't seem to, except perhaps as a reflection of the fragmentary nature of modern times. This would explain "Shales", the exhibition's collective title, but as ideas go, it seems a bit thin for a man of Rauschenberg's standing.

Art, of course, doesn't have to be about anything. It's just when it seems to be about something and that something turns out to be nothing that it gets a bit frustrating. The opposite is true with the recent work of Margaret Mellis. Like Rauschenberg, she works with found fragments of the world in which she lives, in her case bits of broken boats bleached by the sun and the sea and washed up near her home on the Suffolk coast. bits of nothing, in other words, that she turns into new and consistently surprising somethings.

The current exhibition is a smaller and better selected version of the retrospective that opened in Edinburgh earlier in the year. It begins with a self-portrait and an early landscape from her student days in the Thirties, but the first works of note are the series of paper and card collages made soon after her arrival, in St Ives in 1939 – the pictures which

best anticipate the driftwood constructions that she has been making for the last 20 years.

These early collages owe something to the company she kept, particularly Gabo and Nicholson, and even after she moved away from St Ives in 1946 her friendships with artists like Patrick Heron and William Scott seem to have defined the course of her career. It's not that her work is derivative, there's a certainty to what she does that's entirely her own, but it's impossible to look at these pictures without thinking of the Cornish connections.

This retrospective covers a long and productive career. She's in her eighties now and, extraordinarily, it's the most recent work that looks like the best, or at least the most resolved and uniquely her own. There is joy in her driftwood constructions that's all too rare these days: a sophisticated understanding of colour and form, but also a quirky originality and continual inventiveness which makes the likes of Rauschenberg look a little stale. It's a fine exhibition.

Robert Rauschenberg's 'Shales' is at the Bernard Jacobson Gallery, 14a Clifford St, London W1 (0171-495 8575) to 1 Nov; Margaret Mellis: A Retrospective is at Kapil Jaiswala, 4 New Burlington St W1 (0171-437 2172) to 15 Nov



'Wonder' by Robert Rauschenberg, 1994: a reflection of the fragmentary nature of modern times? Or a meaningless assortment of bits?

19/OBITUARIES

Philip Ravenhill

Philip L. Ravenhill, anthropologist and museum curator: born Bath 2 June 1945; Director, West African Museums Project (Abidjan, Ivory Coast) and Senior Research Fellow, International African Institute (London) 1982-87; Chief Curator, National Museum of African Art (Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC) 1987-97; married Judith Thiryan (two sons, one daughter; marriage dissolved); died Washington DC 13 October 1997.

To say that Philip Ravenhill's death was untimely is no overstatement. The National Museum of African Art, Washington DC - where he had worked for the last decade - is in the throes of marking its 10th anniversary. Ravenhill's celebratory exhibition showing donated works of African art has just opened.

He was also due this week to present an important communication in Amsterdam on protecting the African heritage. A major exhibition reflecting NMAA's developing collection of works by contemporary African artists, which he was largely responsible, was being planned. He was still young and still taking on new ventures with undiminished energy.

Ravenhill was in at the start of the NMAA in its new premises, joining shortly before the extraordinary addition to the architectural and museological delights of the famous Mall opened to the public. He, together with Sylvia Williams (the first director), Roy Sieber and Rosalind Walker (the current director), gave the new institution its style, its adventurous acquisitions policy and its consistent high quality of exhibitions.

Ravenhill's upbringing, however, was not exclusively in the United States. He was born in England, in Bath, and received his early education at Portora Royal School in Enniskillen when his parents moved to Co Fermanagh. His

father was a Methodist minister with evangelical leanings which eventually took the family to Bible-belt America, where he completed his schooling. I once asked him, half jokingly, whether his American citizenship was an insuperable impediment to ever persuading him back to work in Britain. He chuckled in his familiar way and replied: "No problem. Sure, I'm an Ulsterman really."

He remained committed to work in Washington, but he was amenable to joining the Peer Review panel looking at the British Museum's exhibitions in 1995 and last year he gave an important talk on aesthetics as the British Museum's annual William Fagg lecture.

He brought to his work at the NMAA both an enviable knowledge of African art and also a very considerable experience of African museums. This was invaluable in situating his institution in an international as well as a national context. His work in Africa began in 1972 whilst he was a postgraduate at the New School of Social Research, New York. He moved to Ivory Coast and began a lasting association with the University of Abidjan during which he focused on what became his leading interest, the anthropological approach to visual culture.

His work was principally conducted among the Wan, Baule, Lobi and Guro. Indeed the two monographs by which he will perhaps be best re-

membered deal with the art of the Baule - in particular his book *Dreams and Reveries: images of other-world mates among the Baule, West Africa* (1996). Although this is a much-written-about field, the depth of Ravenhill's anthropological knowledge placed him in a special position as an interpreter.

In all of this time he was in direct contact with artists, he made films about Ivorian art, and he also worked extensively with museum collections in Africa itself. He had an increasing sense of the frustrations of African museums, often given low priority by ministries of culture, with somewhat demoralised staff and static collections; sometimes with diminishing collections through theft.

But Ravenhill was far from throwing his hands up in despair and disengagement. In 1982 he linked up with the local representative of the Ford Foundation and began developing small projects in the field of cultural preservation and education. From this emerged the West African Museums Project, now Programme (Wamp), which he set up, initially in Abidjan, and which he directed for the five years before his move to Washington. The International African Institute in London was enlisted to provide an independent international context.

Wamp developed a particular philosophy. Its intention was not to try to make up deficits in national governmental funding. It sought rather to co-ordinate attention to common problems and use small grants to encourage significant local initiatives in the cultural and educational field. An exhibition in a small museum in the African countryside on the issue was more likely to gain Wamp support than a request from a national museum for, say, a state-of-the-art fumigation chamber. This was a refreshing antidote to the paternalistic sentiment or political correctness which so readily crowds out proper professionalism.

In his time at Wamp Ravenhill worked with well over 60

different museums in 14 countries in West Africa helping design and support projects to improve training and research, working with collections and linking museums to their local communities. He became one of Air Afrique's best customers.

Wamp's work goes on. It has now evolved further into an African NGO, with a Nigerian chairman, a Beninois director, and a secure base in Dakar, Senegal. But it still retains a philosophy of engagement which Ravenhill set out as its original intent, and he continued an active role in shaping its future.

It was typical of him that, in attending the conference on Illicit Trade in African Antiquities this week, he was intending to take a robust and challenging approach. His view was that unquestionably museums must co-operate to stem the increasing tide of looting of archaeological sites. Beyond that, however, there are the wider and still unresolved issues of how to further intellectual co-operation between the international museum and academic community and African archaeologists or museum professionals. That too, he was intending to say, needs to be part of the wider strategy.

Over the summer I learnt of another of his talents. He generously suggested that my family might stay in his house on Little Cranberry Island off the coast of Maine. He had designed and largely built the timber-framed house himself. Ravenhill was clearly in tune with Rudolf Steiner's principles of craftsmanship. Partition walls were at odd angles, rounded porches gave unexpected views on to the living space beneath - all of which, he confessed, he had worked out whilst recovering from malaria.

He had very considerable skills as a carpenter and clearly took great pleasure in practical things. Indeed, he was also working at the time of his death on his new house in Washington with his companion of recent years, the art historian Massumad Farhad. - John Mack



Miró: her life encapsulates the cultural history of Spain after Franco

Photograph: Ronald Grant Archive

Pilar Miró

Pilar Miró, film director: born Madrid 20 April 1940; Head of Cinematography, Ministry of Culture 1982-85; Head of Spanish Broadcasting 1986-89; (one son); died Madrid 19 October 1997.

The dictator Franco had been dead four years, but Pilar Miró had to fight for another three, until 1981, before her film *The Crime of Cuenca* - deeply offensive to Spain's military establishment - was given permission to be shown. It was the box-office hit of the year.

Born into a military family, she was a rebel from the start, joining law for film studies and, joining the Spanish Socialist Party the moment it was legalised in 1976. As a woman, a single mother, who triumphed in a male-dominated profession, her life encapsulates the cultural history of Spain after the dictatorship fell in 1975.

Miró became Felipe Gonzalez's image consultant during the 1982 election campaign that swept the Socialists to power. The combination of youthful modernity and political moderation that the young Socialist leader projected caught the public mood and kept him in power for 14 years.

The new government promptly put Miró in charge of the Spanish movie business, and within a year she had given Spain one of the most liberal film censorship laws in Europe - hard-core porn cannot be shown to under-18s, but all other ratings are simply for guidance. She also struck the first deal between the movie business and the state-run Televisión Española, strongly favouring Spanish films.

The law with which she was most associated, the "Miró Law" of 1984, introduced an extraordinarily generous system of subsidies that encouraged an

explosion of young talent in the 1980s "movida". Spanish producers could obtain from the authorities up to half the estimated cost of their films in advance. The handout was repayable, but out of further subsidies. Extra money was available for films deemed of "special quality" and even more for high-cost projects. A European Commission official commented at the time: "If I were a Spaniard I'd quit my job and go and make films."

One effect was to boost art-house movies at the expense of vulgar but popular sex comedies that had been the industry's staple since the early Seventies. Another effect was the ballooning of production budgets. Pedro Almodóvar shot to fame during her reign, but the number of films made in Spain dropped by half. In 1989 her law was cancelled and its generous terms trimmed back sharply. Miró took charge of the

Spanish radio and television monopoly RTVE in 1986, but quit under a cloud in 1989. Accused of using the corporation's money to buy clothes and jewellery for herself and presents for her friends, she paid back four million pesetas (£20,000) and, after a protracted court case, was acquitted of all charges in 1992.

With a string of prize-winning films to her credit, she became best known for her live broadcasts of the weddings of the two royal princesses, Elena in Seville in 1995 and Cristina just over two weeks ago in Barcelona. To television audiences used to juddery, intrusive camera work, she introduced standards of filmmaking that won her plaudits throughout Spain, and especially from King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia, who came to pay their respects after her heart attack on Sunday. - Elizabeth Nash

Henry Pelling

Henry Mathison Pelling, historian: born Prenton, Cheshire 27 August 1920; Fellow and Praelector in Modern History, Queen's College, Oxford 1949-65; Tutor 1950-65, Dean 1963-64, Supernumerary Fellow 1980; Fellow, St John's College, Cambridge 1966-80 (socioeconomics 1980); 1980-97; Assistant Director of Research (History), Cambridge University 1966-76; Reader in Recent British History 1976-80 (Emertus); FBA 1972; died Cambridge 14 October 1997.

Henry Pelling was a nonsense, no-flourishes historian of modern Britain for whom history was a matter of fact. When in his celebrated review of A.J.P. Taylor's *English History 1914-45* (1965) Pelling took Taylor to task for his neglect

of the social and economic aspects of his subject, and for his alleged carelessness with fact, it was no doubt the latter dereliction that pained Pelling more.

There was nothing flamboyant about him. Everyone's idea of a Cambridge don (or for that matter an Oxford don), he was happier in the company of his college colleagues than in the public forum. Past master of the devastating quip and meter-out of the barbed one-liner, shortly before his death he mentioned that he needed to send a letter to his colleague, Professor X. Would I bring him an envelope and a postage stamp? Pause, while he licked his lips. Then: "A second-class stamp will be sufficient."

"Pelling here," he would answer on picking up the phone, and sounded forbidding. But he wasn't. Not at all. Though dry he was not arid, as

some college bachelors tend to become, given time. The children of his Oxford colleagues named their hamsters after him, because for all the outward appearance of austerity he delighted in his colleagues' families, submitted cheerfully to the rigours of their Christmases, regularly enquired the progress of their children, and when those children were growing up would invite them to things and make a great fuss of them. There were occasions when he seemed to be missing something, sometimes quite keenly.

The son of a stockbroker, Henry Pelling was at Birkenhead School between the ages of six and eighteen and in 1939 entered St John's College, Cambridge. Reading Classics, he gained a First Class in Part I of the Tripos before departing for war service in the Royal Engineers. Returning to

Cambridge in 1947 he was awarded a starred First in Part II of the Historical Tripos. In 1949 he migrated to Oxford to a Fellowship at Queen's College. Pelling often recalled that, whereas Queen's told him to bring black tie, the LSE, where he was also under consideration, promised to reimburse him his train fare. What he did not recall, and this was most uncharacteristic, was whether or not the LSE had been prepared to convey him first class.

His Oxford years saw Pelling at his most prolific. Between 1954 and 1963 no fewer than nine of his sixteen books were published, among them his *America and the British Left* (1956) and *The British Communist Party* (1958), as well as studies of the American labour movement and British trade unionism and his widely renowned *Short History of the*

Labour Party (1961), now in its 11th edition. Although he was prevailed upon to serve as Dean of Queen's in 1962-63, writing and research occupied him almost entirely. On being asked whether he had any problems and answering that yes, his gas fire didn't work, a freshman was disconcerted to be told by the Dean that his didn't either. Very Pelling.

In 1966 he returned to Cambridge as Assistant Director of Research in History and to the Fellowship of St John's where he spent the rest of his life, and, despite having some 40 research students under his supervision, remained highly productive. In 1971, however, he suffered a severe stroke and despite all that he wrote thereafter, including his enormous biography *Winston Churchill* (1974), he was really never the same again and after

an accident in 1994 became increasingly frail.

Even so, a combination of his own iron determination and the care that his college was able to provide enabled him in the last year of his life to see his last book, *Churchill's Peace-time Ministry 1951-55* (1996), through the press. Nor was there any diminution of the terror-like commitment to the cause of accuracy which had earlier set him in pursuit of the likes of Palmer Dutt, Oswald Mosley and their posthumous apologists.

In his *Who's Who* entry he chose to describe himself as "socioeconomics" of St John's, referring to the brief lapse of his fellowship in 1980. The puckeriness was typical on two counts, revealing both the allusive and the penicilliness in him. The allusion was to Thomas Baker, the non-juror Fellow of

St John's who described himself as "ejected" in the early 1700s. As to the rest, suffice it to say that not everyone at the time saw it Pelling's way. "Dash it all," he would say, as he often did.

Pelling was as widely known for his genuinely good will as he was for his seriously bad puns. Secretly generous, he made a great pretence of being careful with his pennies. When psephology was invented, he was there lying in wait for it, his *The Social Geography of British Elections 1885-1910* (1967) constituting a pioneering contribution to the subject. Before long the bookies were in dread of him, eventually refusing to take his bets on elections unless he would also bet on the horses. Even so he made a killing on the size of Labour's recent majority.

When I last saw him, two



Pelling: puckish

days before he died, and was alarmed by the uncharacteristic absence of newspapers and asked him (more or less) how he was filling his days, "I have taken to listening to *The Archers*," he replied. "I may say I cannot make much of it." Given time, he would no doubt sooner or later have detected error in the affairs of Ambridge too. - Peter Linehan

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

MARRIAGES
WILKINS/FRITH: On 11 October 1997, Elizabeth to Simon, at St Chad's Church, Bishops Cleeve.

DEATHS
ARMSTRONG: Professor Arthur Hilly, peacefully, at Hereford General Hospital, on 16 October. Funeral at 11 noon in Ludlow Parish Church, 24 October. Family flowers, donations for Bardsey Island Trust Appeal, c/o G. Hiron, Funeral Director, Wheelwrights' Shop, Bromfield, Ludlow, Shropshire.

MEMORIAL SERVICES
PITTSBURGH: A memorial service for the Rev Dr Norman Pittsburgh will be held in King's College Chapel, Cambridge, on Saturday 8 November at 2.30pm. All welcome.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3DL, telephoned on 0171-293 2012 or faxed on 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £4.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

Birthdays

Sir Malcolm Arnold, composer, 76; Mr Geoffrey Boycott, cricketer, 57; Mr David Camm, rugby player, 35; Mr Norman Clarke, Emeritus Secretary and Registrar, Institute of Mathematics, 81; Miss Maureen Duffy, novelist, 64; Miss Carrie Fisher, actress, 41; Mr Simon Gray, playwright, 61; Lord Odeve, a former Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, 81; The Rev Peter Hackett SJ, former Master, Campion Hall, Oxford, 73; Dr Evan Haron, 72; Miss Natalia Makarova, ballerina, 57; Mr Peter Mandelson MP, Minister Without Portfolio, 44; Mr Manfred Mann, musician, 57; Professor Sir Roy Marshall, former High Commissioner for Barbados, 77; Miss Nadia Nerina, former prima ballerina, 78; Mr John Stevens, HM Inspector of Constabulary, 55; Lord Thomas of Swanton, historian, 66; Mr Francis Warner, poet and playwright, 60; Dr Elsie Widdowson, nutritionist, 91.

Anniversaries

Births: Katsushika Hokusai, painter, wood-engraver and printmaker, 1760; Samuel Taylor Coleridge, poet

and writer, 1772; Alfred Bernhard Nobel, industrialist and founder of the Nobel Prizes, 1833; Sir Georg Solti (György Sere), conductor, 1912; Leonard Rossiter, actor, 1926; Deaths: Edmund Waller, poet, 1687; Horatio, first Viscount Nelson, killed at Trafalgar 1805; Jack (Jean-Louis Lebris de) Kerouac, poet and novelist, 1909; Bob Todd, actor, 1992; Burt Lancaster (Burton Stephen Lancaster), actor, 1994. On this day: the Franco-Spanish fleet was defeated at the Battle of Trafalgar, 1805; the first British nuclear submarine, HMS Dreadnought, was launched, 1960; 140 lives were lost when a shipwrecked at Aberfan, South Wales, 1966. Today is the Feast Day of St Condeus, St Flavian or Munu of Tighemon, St Hilarton, St John of Bridlington, St Malchus and St Theda.

Professor Carol Weight

A memorial evening for Professor Carol Weight CH CBE RA (1908-1997) will be held at the Royal Academy on Sunday 16 November at 7pm. Those wishing to attend should inform the Secretary's Office in writing, Royal Academy of Arts, Piccadilly, London W1V 0DS.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Prince of Wales, on behalf of the Queen, holds an investiture at the Buckingham Palace. The Prince of Wales, on behalf of the Queen, holds an investiture at the Buckingham Palace. The Prince of Wales, on behalf of the Queen, holds an investiture at the Buckingham Palace.

LAW REPORT: 21 OCTOBER 1997

Damages not subordinate to other creditors' claims

Damages recoverable by a member of a company in proceedings against the company for negligent misrepresentation said to have induced the member to purchase shares from a third party were not sums due to the member "in his character of a member" within section 74(2)(f) of the Insolvency Act 1986, and would not, therefore, be subordinated to the claims of other creditors of the company.

Soden and anor v British & Commonwealth Holdings plc (in administration) and anor House of Lords (Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Lloyd of Berwick, Lord Steyn, Lord Hoffman, Lord Hope of Craighead) 16 October 1997.

The House of Lords dismissed the appeal of the administrators of Atlantic Computers plc against the decision of the

Court of Appeal dismissing their appeal against directions given by the trial judge in an action for damages for negligent misrepresentation brought against Atlantic by British & Commonwealth Holdings plc.

In 1988 B&C had bought the whole of the share capital of Atlantic for £434m. Atlantic and B&C had both subsequently gone into administration. B&C had brought proceedings against, *inter alia*, Atlantic (the main action) for damages for negligent misrepresentation said to have been made by Atlantic to induce B&C to acquire its shares, and against Barclays de Zoete Wedd Ltd (the BZW action) for damages for negligent advice given in relation to the acquisition of Atlantic's shares. BZW had issued third party proceedings against Atlantic for contribution and damages.

In March 1994 the court approved a scheme of arrangement to which B&C was not a party which provided that, subject to the payment of preferential liabilities, the scheme assets should be distributed *pari passu* between the scheme creditors broadly on the same basis as if Atlantic were in liquidation.

Neither the main action nor the BZW action had yet come to trial. In the present proceedings the administrators had applied to the court for directions, *inter alia*, whether the damages and costs recoverable by B&C and BZW if the actions succeeded would be subordinated to the claims of the other creditors of Atlantic by virtue of being sums due to a "member of the company" (in his character as a member) within section 74(2)(f) of the Insolvency Act 1986. The trial judge had held that neither

B&C's claim nor that of BZW would be subordinated to the claims of the other creditors. *Robin Potts QC and Professor Dan Prentice (Cameron McKenna) for the appellants; William Stubbs QC and Catherine Roberts (Stephenson Harwood) for the respondents.*

Lord Browne-Wilkinson said that in the absence of any contrary indication sums due to a member "in his character of a member" within the terms of section 74(2)(f) were only those sums the right to which was based by way of cause of action on the statutory contract between the members and the company in section 14(1) of the Companies Act 1985.

Great reliance had been placed for the administrators on the decisions in *In re Adlestone Linoleum Company* (1887) 37 Ch d 191, and *Webb Distributors (Austin) Pty Ltd v State*

of Victoria (1993) 11 ACSR 731, in both of which it had been held that a sum due in respect of damages payable for breach of contract or misrepresentation made by the company on the occasion of the issue, as opposed to the purchase, of its shares was excluded by the section.

There was, however, nothing in *Adlestone* to justify the application of that decision to cases where the claim made against the company was founded on a misrepresentation made by the company on the purchase of existing shares from a third party. To allow proof for such a claim in competition with the general body of creditors did not either directly or indirectly produce a reduction of capital. The decision in *Webb* stood on exactly the same footing.

The appeal would be dismissed. - Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister

They may like to be beside the seaside – but not with each other



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It is an irresistible vision: Ann Widdecombe on a quad bike, wearing her "Hague" baseball cap back to front, charging over the Eastbourne sand dunes, while Bill Cash and Sir George Young shoot each other with paint pellets, leading teams of MPs called Seeps and Feds.

A Conservative spokesman tried to throw us off the scent of what is really happening at today's think-in and bonding session for MPs in the Grand Hotel, claiming that war games and "primal scream therapy" are off the agenda. What a pity. Instead, the two-day event is being billed as a "conference" which will debate issues as the Tory party adjusts to opposition.

But we all know what this kind of "conference" really means. Every large organisation these days sends its entire middle and senior management on awaydays at country hotels to build team spirit and the co-operative ethos.

There are workshops, seminars, brainstorming sessions – and embarrassing games designed to get people to know and trust each other. Then they stay up all night and drink a lot.

When the memo comes round from the boss announcing that everyone will attend (no spouses), hearts sink. Do we have to? they all complain, knowing that they must go. Tory MPs, on receipt of William Hague's letter in July, responded no differently, instantly regretting that they had elected a former McKinsey's management consultant to the leadership. The grander ones found that – sadly – their diaries were booked solid through to October and beyond. Michael Heseltine was asked if a prior engagement prevented his attendance. "I'm sure there must be one," he said airily. Sir Edward Heath is on a speaking tour in Japan. John Major is "too busy". Only one MP has offered out-

right defiance. Nicholas Soames said he refuses to go "on principle", although he was unable to say exactly which principle prevents him.

Then, in every office, there are the jokers who subvert the whole business with irony. Alan Clark said: "I wouldn't miss it for the world." The ones who really need to be watched, though, are the enthusiasts, the ones who were never allowed to ride go-karts when they were young, or who really do want to discuss corporate rebranding.

In all, the Eastbourne thinkathon offers a fascinating insight into the present agonies of the Conservative party. The clash of cultures is audible 60 miles away. The black-tie culture of England's old social elite (Soames and Clark) meets the baseball-cap culture of modern British management. Note that the old culture won the right to alcohol during proceedings. But the new culture has the

upper hand. Mr Hague's deputy party chairman is Sir Archie Norman, the man who turned dowdy Asda supermarkets into a stock-market phenomenon with a can-do, egalitarian formula – first-name badges for all staff and no chairs in meeting rooms to get decisions made fast.

In this culture, executive awaydays are the absolutely standard way of effecting change in organisations. Indeed, easy though it may be to mock, they are often valuable exercises – at the very least they let off steam and give people a break.

But there must be doubts as to whether the methods used by commercial companies or public-sector service providers such as the BBC are right for a political party. Getting Teresa Gorman and Kenneth Clarke to free-associate on "globalisation", or to listen to a presentation by Sir Tim Bell on "advertising around the

world", is not going to make them realise suddenly that, after all, what unites them as Tories is infinitely more important than what divides them.

The whole point about MPs is that they are argumentative, fissiparous, egocentric and unmanageable. So they should be. They huddle together in parties for reasons of self-interest and ideology, not team spirit. They have to understand that they must behave like a united team, that they must present a convincing front to the public, but it is fruitless to try to make them like each other. And they have just had the most valuable lesson in the need for public unity – a crushing defeat.

So, once the Tories have worked out what they need to do to regain the trust of the electorate, perhaps they should go on an awayday to somewhere other than the Costa Geriatrica, do a bit of orienteering and make a more convincing show of working as a team.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number.
Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address.
Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

LETTERS

Town and country

Sir: You report the claim that "more urban building would mean 'town cramming' and the loss of parks and playing fields" ("Historic challenge to the nation's green belt", 16 October).

Where high environmental quality is achieved, densely populated city suburbs are much sought-after, not least because of easy access to culture and leisure. Well-maintained squares also add value and take up far less space than the treeless green deserts which accompany low-density suburban housing.

Paris and Milan make new public parks the centre of their regeneration policies. In Britain, depopulating cities are made worse by acres of dysfunctional green spaces. We seem only to care about quantity, never quality. We have a Countryside Commission dedicated to creating better access to the countryside for recreation but no agency gives the same attention to the green spaces near to our homes.

Saving the countryside from urban sprawl cannot be done until we improve urban quality.

ALAN BARBER
President
Institute of Leisure and
Amenity Management
Bristol

Sir: Your article on the Hertfordshire green belt housing plan and the responses from the Royal Town Planning Institute and Hertfordshire County Council (Letters, 18 October) draw attention to the growing confusion of interests between neighbouring local authorities.

The proposed housing estate will lie underneath the eastern flight path from Luton airport. Luton Borough Council, the owner of the airport, has recently given planning consent for the airport to expand passenger usage and air traffic. Two county councils, three district councils and other town and parish councils have commented on the plan, mainly because of noise pollution, but with mention also of increasing pressure on the Green Belt.

With the larger more important plans, is the present system of local planning authorities, often with conflicting interests, good enough to provide the fairest results for the communities affected?

ANTHONY FLIND
King's Walden, Hertfordshire



Lords reform

Sir: I am an independent peer. In its enthusiasm, your leading article on Lords reform (16 October) failed to recognise that the present House is working well, that it is not a party chamber and should never compete with the House of Commons; and that it must preserve its one-quarter element of independent or cross-bench peers even in a reformed chamber.

It has long been agreed even by Conservatives that hereditary peers must go, even if some are created life peers. There will be, as you say, "absorbing debate" about it, next year or the year after, but there is nothing contentious here. The real issue is whether any such change can be carried out without corresponding constitutional reform or threat to the present composition of the House. I hope that it can, by all-party consensus, but many

peers are wagging their heads about available parliamentary time even for manifesto commitments. They have, of course, seen it not happen before.

THE EARL OF SANDWICH
Beaminster, Dorset

Cold handshake

Sir: The idea that influenza and the common cold are spread by handshakes followed by rubbing of one's eyes, rather than by coughing and sneezing, has interesting and far-reaching consequences if true (report, 16 October).

We should see marked differences in the patterns of incidence of these diseases from one social group to another depending on whether handshaking was a common mode of greeting.

Schools and Army barracks are often thought of as places where epidemics can explode. Yet school children do not rou-

tinely shake hands with their friends when they meet, nor do members of the armed forces, a salute rather than a handshake being more common. Handshaking is the normal mode of greeting in the business and financial sectors – if the hypothesis you report were really valid, a winter epidemic could decimate the financial world. The cheapest way to prevent such a disaster would be to legislate against handshakes rather than continue the practice of doling out ineffective flu vaccines!

Influenza pandemics in the past have led to tens of millions of deaths the world over, and it is conceivable that a new pandemic could be with us any day. We need to deal honestly with all the facts relating to flu.

Professor CHANDRA WICKRAMASINGHE
Professor Sir FRED HOYLE
Cardiff

Criminal justice

Sir: It is pleasing to win recognition for the openness and enthusiasm of the Criminal Cases Review Commission, as noted in Paul Donovan's article "Still no answer to the riddle of appeals" (15 October). I would, however, like to make it clear that we have clarified our policy with regard to the admissibility of cases.

Our mission is to investigate suspected miscarriages of criminal justice. This means that we do not operate rigid thresholds over which applicants must first pass. It is generally recognised that it would be quite inappropriate for the Commission to limit its statutory remit.

Mr Donovan also expresses concern that we will "go too far", and become inquisitorial in our approach to investigations. The Commission is determined to do justice, and at the same time to deal with cas-

es effectively and expeditiously. In some cases, accordingly, the Commission has to conduct thorough and searching enquiries. Inevitably, there will be occasions when one or other aspect of our investigations will prove barren, but as the body of last resort our job is to look into each case and carry out a thorough review, until we are satisfied that we can come to an informed and fair decision.

GLENYS STACEY
Chief Executive, Criminal
Cases Review Commission
Birmingham

Ungreen trees

Sir: Shell Oil's claim that its industrial tree plantations are a green, renewable energy source (report, 17 October) has no foundation in fact.

Recent research has demonstrated that such rapid-growth plantations, largely monocultural and highly chemical-de-

pendent, take a severe toll on water tables, biodiversity and local economies. They impoverish soils, ruthlessly suppress other growth and are unlikely to be sustainable beyond a limited number of cutting cycles on the same site. The assertion that they do not result in a net addition of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere is unproven.

LARRY LOHMANN
Sturminster Newton, Dorset

Family values

Sir: Perhaps we could all ask Norman Tebbit whether his definition of a family (Column One, 21 October) includes "a mother and her children, abandoned by their father, living at the same address (bed and breakfast; sorry, no council houses left)" or the ever-popular "a Tory MP, his wife and his mistress living under the same roof".

OWAIN MORGAN
London SW6

Latin-lover

Sir: "You'll die," cried my Latin teacher with all the conviction of a man who smoked 60 a day, "but this will live on for ever." Exultantly he waved a copy of Vergil's *Aeneid* before collapsing in a paroxysm of coughing. Vividly he expressed and lived those values of gentlemanly scholarship which you describe in your editorial (18 October). I did not buy that at the age of 15. Fifty years later it is only for its usefulness that I value the Latin I learnt then.

Many years later I was to visit Venezuela on an assignment. Most of those with whom I worked spoke no English at all. Unable even to ask the waiter for the bill, I felt humiliated. Back home I enrolled to learn Spanish. It was like meeting an old friend after long separation. "Llamo, llamas, llama..." intoned my teacher. Where had I heard that before?

BRIAN LOY
Menston, West Yorkshire

Underfunded?

Sir: "Underfunded scientists sell expertise abroad" (11 October). It all depends on what you mean by underfunding. The optoelectronics team at Southampton have enjoyed £20m of support over the last 10 years for their research from the UK's Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council. They have a current grant from the Council for £6.4m, giving two more years of existing support. They are then welcome (and are indeed being encouraged) to apply for future support from the council on exactly the same basis as everyone else.

Professor RICHARD BROOK
Chief Executive
Engineering and Physical
Sciences Research Council
Swindon, Wiltshire

Ethical investment

Sir: Is the Nationwide Building Society's decision (report, 17 October) to force carpetbaggers to assign their bonus payouts to charity the start of a moral revival amongst financial institutions? Will the super-carpetbaggers in the City assign the profits of their speculations to charity – the beginning of the end for the "fat cats"?

JOHN EVANS
Marlow, Buckinghamshire

A handbagging for Oscar Wilde: the lofty image, the sordid reality



MILES
KINGSTON

I once had a homosexual friend who was always great company, but whom I no longer see, mostly because he emigrated to Australia years ago. I don't think he referred to his sexual orientation much except once when he asked me curiously if I had ever had a homosexual experience.

"No," I said. "Apart from one or two teenage attractions to boys with dimpled cheeks."

"Did you ever tell them that you felt attracted?" he said.

"Of course not," I said. "I wasn't that attracted."

He sighed.

"Well," he said, "I really think you ought to seriously consider having a homosexual experience before it's too late. See what life

is like on the other side."

"Before it's too late? How do you mean?"

"Before your looks all go, dear. Won't last for ever, you know."

I ignored this and peered back into the past again.

"I went through a phase of great hero-worship of Oscar Wilde. Does that count as a homosexual experience?"

He sighed again.

"Everyone does that. You don't have to be gay to be an Oscar fan."

So it would seem at the moment, when everyone is trying to explain why the memory of Oscar Wilde is suddenly having a revival and everyone is saying how marvellous he was. Well, not quite everyone.

Brian Sewell in the London *Evening Standard* does not think Oscar Wilde is marvellous. I had always assumed, without knowing why, that Brian Sewell would be pro-Oscar Wilde. Mr Sewell, like Wilde, is a slightly mannered, extremely effective and amusing gadfly of the conventional and dreary Modernist art establishment, and indeed what provokes him into print about Oscar was a modern art object: a proposed memorial to Mr Wilde, designed by a painter called Maggi Hambling.

On 12 June 1997, in the *Evening Standard*, Mr Sewell did not spare Ms Hambling. "A painter of poor sorts..." "barely competent draughtsman..." making sculptures which are

"the sort of beastly things a hotel might buy to add a little interest to potted plants and jars of gladioli" and which "revealed not the slightest talent, intelligence or skill". This was the woman who was invited to design a memorial to Oscar.

Brian Sewell has seen the design. He does not like it. Not at all. "Even a homosexual deserves better than this tasteless insult," he says.

Hmm. When Mr Sewell is in a mood like this, nobody escapes with ungrazed knuckles. Oscar Wilde himself gets off more lightly than Ms Hambling, but not a lot.

"Why are we so obsessed with this man?" asks Mr Sewell. "There is a national sense of guilt that, for sodomy, or

fellatio, or mere affection for a pretty boy, we sent him to prison in 1896, breaking the brilliant but pathetic butterfly upon the wheel of pretended moral outrage..." In threatening the family at the highest social level by consorting with the son of a ferocious Marquess, and by betraying his own wife and children in casual relationships with working-class men and boys, Wilde broke all the rules, rashly, openly, brazenly – and paid the price.

He has ever since been, as it were, a hugger's icon. Passing on swiftly from what must be the most unusual use so far of that over-used word "icon", I think that what infuriates Mr Sewell is what would infuriate most sensible people: namely, that there is such a large gap between the way Oscar Wilde wrote and the way he behaved, or between the way he portrayed himself and the way he was perceived.

Sometimes it was the same; many people who knew him – women as well as men – found him utterly charming, attentive and irresistible. Sometimes it was quite different. Oscar Wilde claimed to be an aesthete, a lofty quivering poetical soul, which did not quite tie in with his sordid sexual private life. Or, took put it another way: "In his trial, Oscar Wilde launched himself into a long speech holding up the 'love that dare not speak its name' as a love that is pure. For all I know such love may exist, but

the time to go on about it is not when there has been read out in court a list as long as your arm of boys you never met except in heavily curtained rooms in Oxford."

Those are the words of Quentin Crisp, in a wonderful book called *How to Have a Life*, which was published in 1975 by Cecil Woolf and has never been read by anyone I have ever met. Quentin Crisp is a homosexual and a wit, a stylist and an aesthete of sorts, but he is very different from Oscar Wilde in most other ways, including the fact that he knows much more about the ways of the world than Oscar Wilde ever did.

More of him and Oscar tomorrow.

Back in control? Blair and Campbell's big idea is ... honesty



ANDREW MARR TURNING OFF THE SPIN

If politics yields morality plays, then this was one. In order to choke off a spate of stories about British entry into a single currency, caused by off-the-record briefing, or "spin", the Chancellor gives an interview – straightforward, pretty clear, up front. And then? To get the desired headline, his spin-doctor, Charlie Whelan, briefs journalists off the record about the on the record interview. His "spin" deliberately over-interpret Gordon Brown's rather blander words, to rule out entry during this parliament; and is, in turn, later partly denied by yet another cabinet minister.

So, to disentangle themselves from spinning, they can only spin harder and more furiously, becoming more entangled. And, since Mr Whelan is now going about denouncing allegations about his involvement as "lies", let it be duly reported that he was overheard doing his latest bout of news management in the Red Lion public house at the bottom of Whitehall on a mobile phone on Friday night. Plenty of other people have been involved in this strange story, including two ministers: but Mr Whelan's mobile phone and affable bellow have been hard at work too, and not for the first time on this story or, indeed, in that public house.

Why should any of this concern you, the reader? First, because the subject under debate will have big implications for most people's prosperity and the future government of the country. And second, because media management by leaks is becoming an embarrassment to parliamentary democracy.

The curious thing about this episode is that the Government is more united, at least, about monetary union than the previous one, and has been struggling with questions of timing and presentation, rather than principle. If the single currency is established, and almost everyone thinks it will be, and is a success (more dubious) than Britain will join.

The simple question at the heart of the yo-yo'ing stock and money markets has been – shall we go in early or shall we go in a little later?

Part of the Government's problem has been that it has wanted different audiences to hear different things. From the early days of the election campaign, Mr Blair has been using a tub-thumping patriotic rhetoric for the Murdoch press, particularly the Sun. Meanwhile, in other parts of the woods – where the audience has been the City, or continental politicians, or liberal Europhiles – the message has been markedly more pro-European.

Stories and briefings have been tailored for the prejudices of the media outlets being addressed. And the trouble is, of course, that we live in a small country, where Financial Times journalists read the Sun and vice-versa: this is not a game which can be played for much longer. If it is, then the contradictions will simply pile up in the cuttings, month by month, year by year, until the new Labour government is accused of Wilsonism.

What Blair needs to do is not simply to bark at a few young ministers and ministerial minders, but to reassess the relationship between tactics and strategy – to care less about the views of different newspapers and proprietors, for instance, and lay down a hard and vigorous line, which is then more clearly explained from the start, even to people

episode, alarmed by the damage done by junior sources, who are then elevated into important voices by journalists, while hiding behind anonymity.

Better still, they have turned their minds to the idea that Mr Campbell, as the Prime Minister's spokesman, should break convention and start to conduct his daily briefings openly, on the record.

Their early conclusion is that it would do little damage and quite a lot of good – for government, not just for themselves. They are absolutely right. At the moment, we have a wide array of people described by journalists as senior "sources" and the impression is given of a pseudo-democracy of rival voices who speak for that amorphous, confused being known as "the Government".

So someone from the Treasury or the Ministry of Defence or the Welsh Office can be quoted in print as "a senior government source". If they say something Blair regards as hokey or bizarre, then his denial via Downing Street merely pits another anonymous senior source, albeit from Number Ten, against the first one.

So far as the reader is concerned, they can sound equally persuasive. Who really speaks for the regime? No-one quite knows. That was part of the trouble in the Emu story. If Blair's spokesmen went on the record every day, that would make the position, and the true hierarchy of power, clear.

It would provide the public with definitive, checkable re-

briefing, for such is life and politics, and always will be – though at least we'd know what came from the top and what didn't. The television cameras would not be allowed in, as I understand it, because Mr Campbell doesn't want to become any more of a national figure than he already is – the messenger mustn't be bigger than the message.

What, finally, about that larger criticism, that the Prime Minister and other senior ministers must stop trying to address different audiences differently? Any Prime Minister who wasn't nervous about the power of the Murdoch press, and sensitive to public worry about monetary union would be a fool; and yet, if we are going to join Emu at some stage, then a confrontation with News International and the Daily Mail is probably inevitable. With the Conservative Euro-sceptics divided and scattered, this is the moment to move the argument decisively on. If not, the anti-EU movement will regroup, recover, and be a much bigger problem for Blair in one or two years' time than it is now.

So whatever the timing of our entry, and the political strategy surrounding it, surely the time has come for a proper, detailed expression of its European thinking from the Government, linking the currency question with the constitution. It would need to start from an open acknowledgement of the full implications of Emu. Contrary to some recent ministerial effusions, this concerns power, and institutions, not merely labour markets and economic cycles.

In the end, Blair will choose audacious but practical pro-Europeanism. He often takes a long time to settle his mind; but when obliged to choose, he opts for the radical option.

So I think that the triumphalist anti-Europeans in the press and elsewhere are triumphing a little prematurely. It is commonly said of Blair that, almost whatever your view, you leave his company thinking he agrees with you. Those who say so don't watch him carefully, or listen intently enough. He is not a naturally confrontational or abrasive man; his signals of dissent are modest but, in time, unmistakable.

And from now on, the anti-Europeans should watch him particularly carefully. For forced to choose between Murdoch's favours and Europe, he will choose Europe. That is the sensible option. For Murdoch can harm him but an anti-European policy would destroy almost everything he wants to achieve in politics.



Alastair Campbell: emerging into the light
Photograph: Kevin Coombes



ANTHONY BEVINS WHITEHALL PRESS OFFICERS

The whinge from the Whitehall information machine, about a hapless press officers being "purged" by Labour stormtroopers, has been extremely well-focused over recent weeks. If their spin is to be believed, they are as fine a body of men and women as any to be found in any profession in the land; they have been providing a selfless service to Tory Ministers and the media for years and now, out of the blue, they are under threat. So far, seven heads of departmental press offices have gone, and others are said to anticipate early departure.

The claim being put about by some is that Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's chief press secretary, wants to turn the Government Information Service into a pro-Labour propaganda machine, modelled on the highly successful team that backed up Labour's election campaign. It would be a pity if the separate row over Charlie Whelan, the Chancellor's garrulous spin-doctor, and the European single currency, was allowed to obscure the reality.

With many honourable exceptions, and they know who they are, the existing Government Information Service is a waste of time, space and cash. As a general rule, their service to Ministers has been awful, and their service to the media has been abysmal.

On the off-chance that this might be seen as the sort of critical assessment you might expect from a non-Conservative newspaper, Saturday's Daily Telegraph provided a corroborative perspective from the Right. After 18 years of Conservative government, it found it easy to understand why Labour, and some journalists, were exasperated by Whitehall press officers. "This par-

ticular brand of civil servant is as old-fashioned as a bowler hat, and as unyielding as an umbrella. He (or she) refuses to leak stories, produces turgid briefs devoid of catchy sound-bites, takes up to a week to answer phone calls, and feels queasy at the thought of any spin. Other infuriating habits include leaving promptly at 5pm every day, just when news stories are breaking, and believing that their duty is to their profession, rather than the media or the politicians."

Many press officers have seen their role as the guardians of information, with-holding it, rather than as disseminators of information the public has a right to know. It is, after all, the public's information, just as much as it is the taxpayers' money these people are dealing with.

The best press officer will always anticipate and volunteer information. But most of them would prefer to let you stab around in the dark, and retain their precious information about their person. That was their power, their glory, and now, if they face a come-uppance, that is no more than many others faced during the Thatcher revolution of the 1980s.

A problem would arise if Alastair Campbell were planning to turn these civil servants into lapdog Labour propagandists. But he sees it as his task to make the service more pro-

Most of them would prefer to let you stab around in the dark, and retain their precious information about their person. That was their power, their glory

fessional, giving better service to Ministers, media and the public, not least by getting them involved in the initial consideration of policy.

In a letter to all information service colleagues, on 26 September, he said that media "handling" of any policy had to be built into the decision-making process at the earliest stage: "As a policy is devised, how it will be explained and communicated should be an integral part of the process."

Mr Campbell has also told colleagues that he sees it as the job of a press officer to answer factual questions with facts. If it works, some reporters would see that as an improvement.

The point is not what causes schizophrenia, but how to control it



ANDREAS WHITTAM SMITH CARE IN THE COMMUNITY

A small minority of mentally ill people commit homicides. These acts are usually classified by the courts as manslaughter rather than murder on the grounds of diminished responsibility. There seem to be about 25 such incidents every year. Jayne Zito, whose husband was killed by a schizophrenic, has set up a trust, the Zito Trust, which collects these figures.

After the trial, there generally follows a report. Often the failings of hospital staff and social workers are the centre-piece of the findings. In the case of Sarah Benyon, a 22-year-old insurance clerk, who was undergoing treatment for schizophrenia when she killed her father, the report argued that Benyon's medication was poorly monitored, the risk she posed was not properly assessed and she was foolishly given leave from a mental health unit in a Bristol hospital.

Actually, "medication" is the key word in the account. By medication is meant the use of tranquilliser drugs. They act as sedatives and reduce responsiveness to external events and may also diminish anxiety. Without the use of these drugs, discovered in the 1950s, there could have been no closing down two decades later of asylums or mental hospitals and sending their patients out into the community to be cared for there.

For the drugs in question are pharmacological straitjackets.

They are not curative. In effect they resemble the mechanical restraints – locks, bars, chains – that were in use up to the middle of the nineteenth century. When an enlightened superintendent arrived at the County Asylum in Lancashire in 1840, he congratulated himself on removing 19 tons of iron bars and gates and other restraining devices. In a sense, the staff concerned in the Bristol case stand accused of having failed to turn the chemical key in the lock properly and thus restrain the schizophrenic insurance clerk.

Medication is important in another sense. Nowadays giving drugs to schizophrenic patients is often the sole method used to control the illness. The prevailing view is that schizophrenia is organic in nature, a disease of the brain and probably genetic in origin. The patient is disabled and requires a sheltered environment plus medication. This contrasts with the conventional wisdom of 30 years ago when stressful events in early childhood were believed to be a major factor. In its crudest formulation, it was said that families caused schizophrenia. The appropriate treatment, therefore, was psychotherapy or what are known more graphically as the talking therapies.

This humanistic hypothesis lost ground partly because it failed to provide statistical

backing for its assertions and partly because advances in the neuro sciences, with the help of computers and brain scanning, seemed to hold out great promise of finding a physical explanation. Families rebelled, too, at being blamed and in the United States, the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill was formed to rebut such notions.

However no organic marker has been discovered which determines whether a patient is or is not schizophrenic. Post-mortem examinations alone have never identified a schizophrenic sufferer. Two centuries of work, conducted with great intensity over the past 15 years, have as yet come to nothing.

The effort will continue, but it is unfortunate that researchers in this field, cut off as they are from actual patients, adamantly refuse to attribute any significance to what sufferers from schizophrenia might say about themselves. Their hallucinations, their delusions, their strange talk, their inexplicable silences, their thought disorders are all dismissed as the meaningless results of convulsive electric brain storms. Attempts to make sense of schizophrenic discourse are seen as a waste of time.

Yet at a big, international symposium for the psychotherapy of schizophrenia held in London last week, ample evidence of the good results

of working directly with sufferers was provided. Professor Max Birchwood from Birmingham University described his direct approach to delusional thinking. He argued that it was possible to engage people in a dialogue about their disordered beliefs and experiences in such a way that the individual could stand back and reflect on his or her mental life.

Professor Birchwood does not refer to "patients" – whose role it is to take expert advice – but to "clients", with whom you collaborate. The aim is to promote a mastery over distressing symptoms, such as hearing voices. For instance, by recognising the cues or triggers for the onset of voices, "clients" may be able to exert some control over them and even switch on or off, say, the dead father's voice. This is not Freudian analysis, in which the attempt is made to bring submerged memories of childhood traumas to the surface but an exercise in engaging the sufferer in his or her own cure. The results are often a substantial diminution in the occurrences of schizophrenic symptoms.

Competition between the two notions of mental illness that I have described has been a feature of psychiatry for two hundred years. Biological psychiatry was dominant throughout most of the nineteenth century, peaking at the time of Alzheimer. Then Freud took

the subject in the other direction, until the pendulum turned again in the 1960s. This is not a nuanced argument of fine distinctions; if one hypothesis is true, the other cannot be.

Nonetheless, there is a middle way which, while it cannot possibly resolve the age old mind/body dichotomy, can facilitate progress in handling schizophrenia. The method is to combine medication with therapy. Neither approach has yet been able to provide a cure, but both can alleviate the distressing symptoms of schizophrenia in their different ways. Why not use them together?

In fact dual treatment has often been advocated, but rarely put into practice because the cost of psychotherapy is significantly higher than the costs of drugs. It is the sheer quantity of psychotherapeutic work that cannot often be afforded under present health budgets. Typically a psychotherapist may have to work with a single sufferer for four sessions a week over a period two years and sometimes longer.

The Department of Health is beginning to take this on board. To the extent that it was able to promote and finance a dual discipline approach, there would be beneficial effects, not just for the mental health of the sufferer but for the community as a whole. And in due course, Mrs Zito would see a decline in the homicide figures which she monitors.

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ALLIANCE LEICESTER

KPMG and Ernst & Young plan £11bn merger

KPMG and Ernst & Young jumped on the accountancy merger bandwagon yesterday, proposing a tie-up that will create the world's largest audit and consultancy firm.

The merger mania sweeping the accountancy profession intensified yesterday as KPMG and Ernst & Young said they were planning to join forces. The combined firm would leapfrog rivals Coopers & Lybrand and Price Waterhouse, which announced a tie-up only last month.

The proposed deal will attract the attention of competition watchdogs around the world, especially coming so soon after the other planned accountancy mega-mergers between Coopers & Lybrand and Price Waterhouse.

KPMG and Ernst & Young denied that the announcement was only a spoiler to wreck the marriage plans of its rivals.

If it receives regulatory approval, the deal will knock Coopers/PW into second place and Andersen Worldwide into third. It will create a firm with worldwide revenues of more than \$18bn (£11bn), 163,000 staff and almost 13,000 partners.

In the UK, the enlarged firm would audit almost one in four of the companies in the FTSE 100 index. If both the tie-ups announced in the last month go ahead, almost 90 per cent of the country's 100 leading companies will be audited by only two firms.

The arrangement is expected to put pressure on Andersen Worldwide and Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, the only two of the former "Big Six" firms to remain as stand-alone businesses, to discuss a link.

Nick Land, senior partner at Ernst & Young, denied the firms had been hurried into an

announcement by last month's Coopers and PW merger. He also refuted claims that the deal represented a U-turn from his position last month when he highlighted the competition issues raised by the marriage of Coopers and PW.

Colin Sharman, chairman of KPMG International and chairman-elect of the enlarged business, defended the merger yesterday as the inevitable consequence of the increasingly global demands of the firm's clients. "As our clients expand into new markets, they expect us to have the global abilities and resources to provide them with the specialist services they need."

Job losses are not expected to be a major feature of the link, with both firms claiming to be in need of more good quality staff. Mr Land admitted, however, that the uncertainty caused by the deal would probably lead to "a higher than usual rate of attrition". Last month, he was quoted as saying he was confident of picking up staff following his rivals' merger announcement.

Mr Sharman said he was reasonably confident the merger would clear the regulatory hurdles. If the deal gets a green light from the regulators in Europe and the US, it would catapult the as yet unnamed firm into pole position. Its revenues would outstrip the \$13bn that Coopers & Lybrand/Price Waterhouse generate and Andersen's \$11bn.

The planned merger was greeted with scepticism by the firm's clients, who are worried that the reduction of choice implied by the consolidation will outweigh any benefits provided by the new group's larger scale.

The finance director of one FTSE 100 company described the deal as "a serious restriction of choice, particularly in the UK, both in audit and consulting." He added that the merger "does nothing for me as a customer. Any of the firms has sufficient resource to service us adequately on their own."

Outlook, page 23



The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, pressed the button to launch the Stock Exchange Electronic Trading Service, the market's new order-driven system, yesterday. Ten minutes later, the market was almost 120 points down. Shaky start for SETS, page 27

Photograph: Andrew Burman

Brown Monday sends shares down and the pound higher

The City gave the Chancellor a firm thumbs-down over the confusion generated by informal briefings about Government policy on the single currency. Diane Coyle, Economics Editor, describes how "Brown Monday" took the pound back to levels sure to alarm exporters.

EMU by reversing much of their movement in the weeks since the earlier reports that the pound might join soon after the first wave. As widely predicted, the pound leapt higher and shares and gilts fell sharply in price.

Within 10 minutes of the opening of the new Stock Exchange trading system by Gordon Brown, the FTSE-100 index had plunged more than 118 points. It recovered to end 60 points down, at 5,211, in light trading on the inaugural day of the system.

On the other hand, the signals that the Government has all but ruled out single currency membership during the cur-

rent parliament took the pound up nearly four pence to DM2.89. Its index against a range of currencies gained a full point to reach 101.5.

This jump coincided with a new survey showing that confidence among exporters has fallen to a five-year low while the proportion of businesses favouring UK membership of the single currency has climbed to two-thirds from just over a half a year ago.

Nick Butcher of DHL International, which carries out the quarterly survey, said: "This latest move in the exchange rate will leave exporters dissatisfied. They want to see stability in the

currency markets and a weaker pound." One in five of the 1,000 firms surveyed said they would lay off employees if the pound stayed at its current level.

Mr Brown emphasised the need for a period of stability and repeated his five economic tests for UK membership of EMU: the impact on jobs, investment and financial services, the flexibility of labour markets and the convergence with member economies.

He said an announcement about the Government's approach would be made first to Parliament.

But City analysts were critical of what was widely seen as the

Chancellor's mishandling of the policy pronouncements. James Barty at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell said: "It is sensible to rule out joining the single currency until after the election, but this has been a very odd way to do it."

Michael Saunders at Salomon Brothers had even more succinct advice for the Government. "They should shut up. The more they say, the more confusion they sow," he said.

Some City experts warned that the pound could move even higher if figures due later this week showed that the economy expanded too fast for the Bank of England's comfort in the third quarter. If the official

growth figures are as strong as many fear, they would increase the chance of a further increase in interest rates, which could in turn boost the pound.

However, yesterday brought a sign that the economy could be starting to come off the boil with figures showing a dip in consumer confidence.

The level of confidence remains as high as it was in October 1987 but respondents to the October survey for the European Commission had clearly become less optimistic about the outlook for the economy during the next 12 months.

Outlook, page 23
Market Report, page 25

Asian tigers in retreat as stocks tumble and currencies slump to new low

The tenth anniversary of the 1987 Black Monday stock market collapse hung heavily over East Asian markets as share prices tumbled again yesterday providing an unpleasant reminder of how bad things may get if the sell off of Asian equities and currencies continues. Stephen Vines reports from Hong Kong.

points, the eight largest single day fall on record. However, in percentage terms the damage does not look so bad as the market was down less than 5 per cent, compared with the disastrous 33 per cent fall after the Black Monday collapse.

The problems in Hong Kong stem largely from two factors. On the one hand, a rise in mortgage rates, leading to a predicted interest-rate hike, has taken its predictable toll on share prices, while on the other hand the territory's market is pervasively suffering from its high degree of liquidity.

"The real problem", says James Osborn, director of sales at ING Barings Securities in Hong Kong, "is the collapse of other Asian markets" which has forced fund managers to turn to the territory to raise funds for redemptions as fund investors bail out of the Asian markets and head elsewhere.

No other market is more li-

quid, nor easier to use for obtaining quick cash infusions. Hong Kong's liquidity was underlined yesterday as turnover in the stock market rose to HK\$17.2bn (£1.4bn).

In Thailand, the heavily battered baht slumped to a new low on news that Thanong Bidya, the finance minister, was resigning in protest against his inability to get the government to implement measures to secure the International Monetary Fund and World Bank \$17.2bn (£1.4bn) bail-out.

His resignation, the seventh of a finance minister in the space of two years, fuelled a demonstration in Bangkok yesterday calling for an end to the shaky coalition government headed by the former military chief Chavalit Yongchaiyudh. The baht slid below 38 against the dollar as share prices fell almost 3 per cent.

There was a bigger currency shakeout in Taiwan where in-

vestors are bracing themselves for a full scale devaluation after the Central Bank announced late last Friday that it would no longer be intervening in the market to support the local currency. The New Taiwan dollar fell over 3 per cent, to a 10-year low against the US dollar while blue chip share prices plunged by almost 4 per cent.

In Malaysia, where Anwar Ibrahim, the finance minister and deputy prime minister, had delivered a supposedly market-pleasing budget on Friday, investors responded yesterday by following the decline of the Thai stock market and reducing the value of the local currency by some 1.5 per cent.

International investors are clearly unsettled by the prospect of leaving funds in a country whose prime minister abuses them and has now decided that an international Jewish conspiracy is at work to undermine the Malaysian economy.

£573m Brazilian ice-cream for Unilever

Unilever, the Persil detergents and Walls ice-cream giant, has made its first big acquisition since the £5bn sale of its specialty chemicals business in May. It is paying £573m for Brazil's largest ice-cream company in a deal that will make it the market leader in South America. Nigel Cope, City Correspondent, discovers that analysts expect more "bolt-on" deals from Unilever, rather than one huge takeover.

and Viennetta in Brazil, where the ice-cream market is growing rapidly. Ice-cream consumption there is only one litre per head. This compares with three to five litres per head in neighbouring countries such as Chile and Argentina, five to eight litres per head in Western Europe and 20 litres in the United States. The Brazilian ice-cream market doubled between 1994 and 1996. It is now worth £1bn a year and Unilever predicts it will double again over the next decade. "If they drink Coca-Cola, I have no doubt they will buy Magnums," one analyst said.

The acquisition is in line with the strategy announced by Unilever's chairman, Niall FitzGerald, at the beginning of the year. He said then the company would concentrate on growing its "starred" product categories such as margarine, detergents and beverages with particular emphasis on emerging markets. Yesterday he said: "This is an important acquisition for Unilever. It opens up good growth opportunities that will lead to sustained value growth."

Unilever was left with a warehouse of over £3bn following the sale of its specialty chemicals business to ICI in May. Though

there has been speculation that the Anglo-Dutch group might use the firepower to acquire a major US food company, analysts said smaller deals like this were more welcome.

"I'd sooner 10 deals like this than one bulk," said David Laing, food analyst at brokers Henderson Crosthwaite. "It is exactly what one had hoped they might do. This business is a collector's item."

Kibon achieved operating profits of £46m on sales of £204m in the year to October 1996. The deal includes Philip Morris's half share in the Sorvane business in North-east Brazil which recorded sales of £42m that year.

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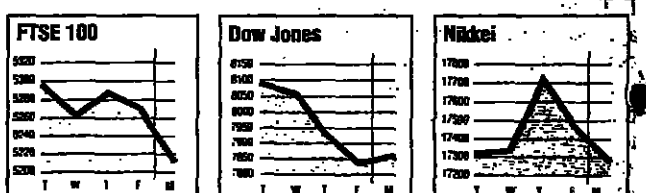
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The holiday is to be taken between 1 November & 31 December (excluding 15-24 Dec). For a copy of Funway Holidays 1998 USA - Any Way You Like brochure call 0181 466 0222 - subject to availability.

One cost £50 per minute at all times. Winner picked at random after lines close 29 October 1997. Usual Newspaper Publishing rules apply. Editor's decision is final

STOCK MARKETS



Indices	Close	Change	Change(%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	5211.00	-60.10	-1.14	5330.80	3900.40	3.36
FTSE 250	4908.50	-41.90	-0.85	4963.80	4348.10	3.26
FTSE 350	2511.10	-27.50	-1.08	2555.30	1948.20	3.32
FTSE All Share	2454.50	-25.68	-1.04	2492.41	1925.79	3.36
FTSE SmallCap	2398.0	-3.20	-0.34	2408.20	2128.40	3.04
FTSE RealIndex	1306.4	-5.70	-0.43	1348.50	1198.70	3.20
FTSE AIM	1013.3	0.50	0.05	1138.00	1003.80	0.96
Dow Jones	7867.17	18.67	0.24	8258.51	5972.73	0.67
Nikkei	17294.51	-183.91	-1.06	21418.25	17204.70	0.67
Hang Seng	12970.88	-630.13	-4.83	16673.27	12055.17	3.21
Dax	4040.75	-20.75	-0.51	4438.83	2669.25	1.59

INTEREST RATES

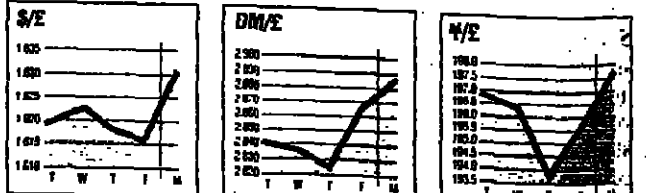


Money Market Rates	3 month	1 yr	1 yr chg	10 year	1 yr chg	10 year	1 yr chg	10 year
UK	7.36	1.30	7.51	1.23	6.59	-0.99	6.53	-1.40
US	5.81	0.28	6.09	0.28	8.18	0.35	8.27	0.37
Japan	0.53	0.04	0.59	-0.05	1.94	-0.93	2.56	-0.86
Germany	3.66	0.54	4.19	0.95	5.66	-0.32	6.21	-0.61

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Falls
Meris & Spencer 860.00 34.50 5.52	Peel Higgs 675.00 -55.00 -8.13
Hambros 275.50 12.00 4.34	Reins 129.00 -8.50 -6.54
Mersey Docks 439.50 20.00 4.61	Great Port Est 259.00 -18.00 -6.97
Capita grp 314.00 9.50 3.12	Inspeco Grp 236 -13.5 -5.47

CURRENCIES

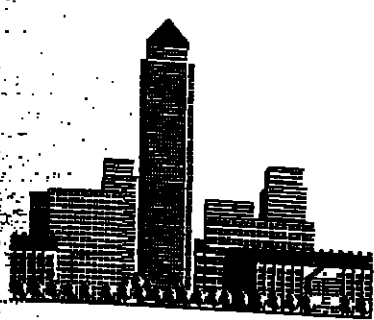


Pound	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago	Dollar	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago
Dollar	1.6304	+1.47c	1.5924	Sterling	0.6134	-0.56c	0.6280
D-Mark	2.8898	+2.72p	2.4443	D-Mark	1.7722	-0.01p	1.5354
Yen	197.76	+Y3.64	179.51	Yen	121.30	+Y1.15	112.36
E index	100.50	+0.70	89.30	S index	105.10	+0.00	97.80

OTHER INDICATORS

at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago	Index	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago
Brent 11 (6)	19.37	-0.02	24.55	GDP	112.80	3.50 109.0 24.04
Oil	324.15	-1.10	381.90	RPI	159.30	3.6 159.76 Nov
4.84	0.02	4.89	Base Rates	7.00	5.75	11

source: Bloomberg



OUTLOOK ON MONETARY UNION, KPMG'S MARRIAGE PLANS AND UNILEVER'S BRAZILIAN EXPANSION

Brown comes close to ruling out EMU for good

Gordon Brown's honeymoon with the financial markets has ended in an entirely predictable manner - impaled on the 2,000 year old issue of Britain's relationship with the rest of Europe. The last Government failed to come up with a credible policy on monetary union; this one looks like being no better at it.

Furthermore, in trying to prepare the markets and the electorate for a more single currency stance, the Government seems to have slipped on a well sign posted banana skin. You cannot tell the markets one thing one day, then quite another the next; they just won't take you seriously. Nor will the rest of Europe, where Labour's honeymoon seems to have been ended as completely by the events of the past few days as it has in the City.

As it happens, Mr Brown has not been as severely punished by financial markets as he might have been, or not yet in any case. Sterling has regained some of its former strength and the long term costs of Government borrowing have gone back to where they were before the FT's now infamous "scoop". But there is not much sense of crisis out there, and if the City's faith in the Government's news management skills has been punctured, its broader belief in the underlying strengths of the UK economy has not.

Nor should it be. Monetary policy is now in the very capable hands of an independent Bank of England, while the Government finances haven't been in better shape since the mid to late 1980s. There

is a sense, therefore, in which Labour's inability to agree a stance on the single currency doesn't really matter. The economy should keep chugging along as nicely with the same old wait and see policy Britain has always had on the single currency as with the more committed approach floated in the FT.

Even so, it is possible that the markets haven't yet fully taken on board the extent of the policy shift that Gordon Brown has signalled here. In ruling out British membership in the first wave and encouraging the suggestion that no decision will be taken in the life time of this parliament, Mr Brown has in effect ruled out membership in 2002 too, when single currency notes and coin are scheduled to be introduced. To stand any practical chance of joining in 2002, the decision has to be taken at least three years previously, so as to allow adequate preparation by business and government.

By stipulating five pre-conditions, Mr Brown also came very close yesterday to ruling us out for good, for it seems unlikely that the business cycles of European economies are going to converge much more than they have already. Even in the US, with 200 years of monetary and political union behind it, economic performance can vary greatly between states. Conditions for monetary union in Europe are never going to be perfect. Economically, Europe cannot ever expect to be in complete harmony. If that is Labour's pre-condition, then we will never be a part of it. That may be

what the electorate wants, but there is a real danger of the markets seeing it for what it is, an act of political cowardice.

Six into four won't go

There are two possible explanations for yesterday's hurried engagement notice from Ernst & Young and KPMG. The first is that the bean-counters at the two firms were sent into a blind panic by the nuptials announced last month by Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand. If regulators are going to allow the Big Six becoming the Big Five, then KPMG had jolly well better be in on the act too.

Getting the marriage plans out within weeks of the other lot has the merit of beating Arthur Andersen and Deloitte Touche to the altar. The other theory, strictly for conspiracists, says that yesterday's announcement was a sham. KPMG and Ernst & Young have no intention of linking up at all but they think that by throwing another anti-competitive mega-merger into the regulator's in-tray they can ensure their rivals' deal is blocked. The lack of any flesh on the bare bones of yesterday's announcement rather backs this latter theory.

KPMG is putting itself in a position where it has nothing to lose. Either it leapfrogs the other global behemoth being created by Coopers and Price Waterhouse, or it ensures that the rival get together never happens. Heads I win, tails

you lose. The upshot is much more likely to be that neither of these two deals happens than that both of them do. Clients are irritated by the increasing lack of choice and the conflicts of interest thrown up by the mergers. Staff, it now appears, are also overwhelmed by the prospect of working for these giant, homogenous monoliths.

The only good thing about these proposals is that the merged entities are so enormous that they qualify for automatic reference to the European Commission, as well as the watchdogs in all the domestic markets they operate in. Regulators only need to take one look at the prospect of 87 per cent of Britain's leading companies being audited by just two firms of accountants to know what to do.

Unilever's Magnum force

The ice cream map of Latin America is beginning to resemble one of those domino-effect models that the Cold War planners of the CIA so used to enjoy frightening us with. Instead of being overrun by Communism, the region is being overrun by Cornettos.

Yesterday's acquisition of Kibon, Brazil's largest ice-cream business, from Philip Morris, not only catapults Unilever into number one slot in Brazil but also gives it overall leadership across the entire Latin American market. From a standing start in 1993, it now occupies first

or second place in 12 South and Central American countries in its continuing ice-cream war with Nestle.

Admittedly, this is hardly front-page stuff. Even a deal costing close on £600m is still only a bolt-on acquisition in the Unilever scale of things. How much more thrilling it would have been had Niall FitzGerald joined in the merger mania over running the world and used the £3bn from the sale of the group's speciality chemicals business to help finance a tilt at Heinz.

Ice cream, yellow fats, tea and mass skin products - what Unilever calls its "star" brands - may never set the world alight. But for shareholders, the strategy of organic growth and small scale acquisitions in developing markets in these product areas will almost certainly prove more rewarding.

Unilever's promise to turn Kibon into "an international ice cream innovation centre" admittedly doesn't augur well, but leaving aside the management jargon and concentrating instead on the cold facts, this looks an excellent deal. Kibon's operating margins are already 50 per above those Unilever achieves in Europe, and the scope for growth is enormous in a country where ice-cream consumption per head is a third of that in Argentina and a quarter of that in Chile.

Given that Brazilian ice cream sales have doubled in the last two years it is hardly fanciful to suppose that the market can double again over the next decade. Prosaic as it Mr FitzGerald's strategy may be, it is undoubtedly the right one.

IN BRIEF

Newcastle Utd to set up own television channel

Newcastle United yesterday confirmed plans to set up its own TV channel. The Premier League football club is in talks with a number of broadcasters and has received a joint offer from BSkyB and Granada. It plans to finalise a deal by early next year. Newcastle is also planning a merchandising drive to revitalise its mail order business. It has just signed a contract to sell replica football team shirts and its fashion ranges, which have been developed with ex-Next boss George Davies, throughout Scandinavia in a home shopping catalogue. It is also in discussions with high street retailers in Hong Kong to establish a business in the Far East. Newcastle announced a 37 per cent rise in operating profits to £8.1m and a pre-tax profit of £8.3m after player transfers for the year to July, compared to a loss of £23.6m in the previous season. It stands to make an extra £3.5m in TV revenues if it progresses to the semi-final of the European Champions Cup. *Investment column, page 24*

Starwood to take over ITT

ITT, the US hotel group which owns the Sheraton chain, yesterday agreed to a \$13.3bn takeover bid from Starwood Lodging in a deal which could create the largest luxury hotel group in the world. The move is designed to thwart rival US hotel group Hilton, which has launched a \$11.1bn hostile bid for ITT. The news is a blow to Ladbroke, which has formed an alliance with Hilton. It has already held preliminary talks with Hilton about taking control of some of the Sheraton chain around the world. Starwood's surprise offer comes just weeks before ITT was due to face a shareholders' vote on Hilton's bid after an increasingly bitter battle between the two sides. The merger will create a group with 650 hotels in 70 countries, and marry ITT's Sheraton and Caesars hotels with Starwood's Westin, Ritz and Marriott chains.

Pay-per-view film deal signed

Four cable companies yesterday confirmed they had signed an agreement with Warner Brothers to launch pay-per-view film services. NTL, Telewest Communications, General Cable and Diamond Cable Communications have secured the film rights from Warner on a non-exclusive basis. BSkyB confirmed it had signed a similar deal with Warner at the end of last week. The cable companies were also close to signing deals with Sony and Paramount, sources said.

Energis could be worth £1.3bn

The planned flotation of Energis, the telecommunications group owned by National Grid, could value the company at £1.3bn, according to a leading industry analyst. James Dodd, from Dresner Kleinwort Benson, predicted Energis would take 10 per cent of the UK business phone market in 10 years and would see its revenues rise to £323m in 2000, compared with £97m last year. Mr Dodd added that his valuation was "modest," if compared with counterparts in the US, though the final price would also reflect UK stock market conditions. National Grid is expected to sell off between 25 and 30 per cent of Energis in December.

GA in £272m Canadian buy

General Accident, the insurance company, announced it was paying £600m (£272m) to buy Canadian composite insurer Canadian General. Investors, however, marked down its shares by 3.5 per cent to £11.05 as many judged that GA was overpaying for its acquisition. Following the deal GA's solvency ratio, currently 78 per cent, will fall to 70 per cent.

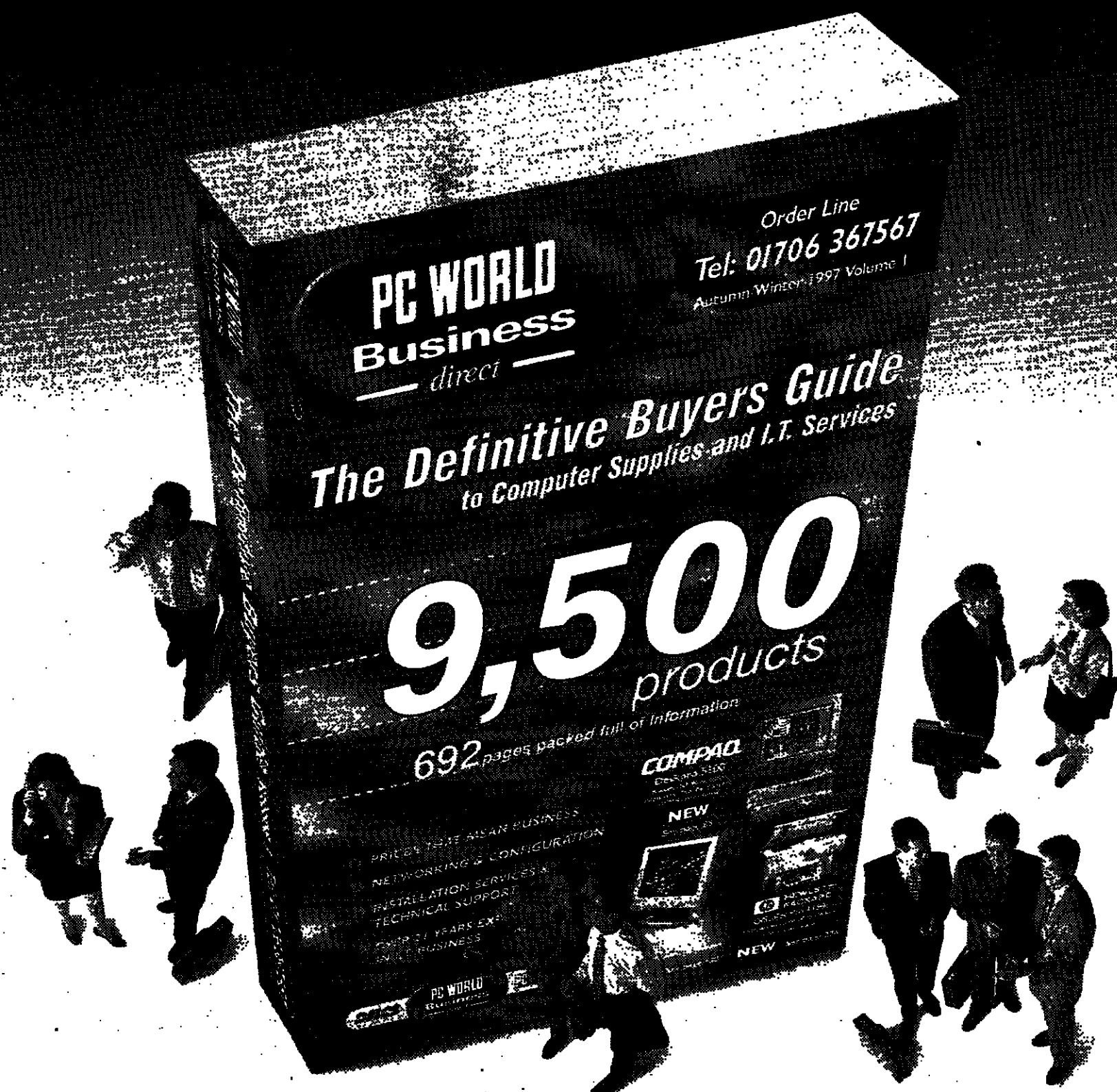
France Telecom shares soar

Shares in France Telecom soared by 15 per cent on the Paris stock market yesterday as the telephone giant made its long-awaited debut as a public company. Some 3.9 million small investors joined in the windfall, including 125,000 France Telecom staff. The shares opened at Fr215, valuing the group at Fr215bn, compared with the Fr187 paid by institutional investors and the discounted Fr182 price for small shareholders. Though the price slipped back in later trading, the debut makes France Telecom the country's largest company by market value, ahead of the oil group Elf Aquitaine.

Hambros break-up more likely

A possible break-up of Hambros, the merchant banking, insurance and estate agency group, appeared more likely last night after the company admitted it had appointed rival Schroders to advise it on ways in which it could improve "performance and returns to shareholders". Rebel Hambros shareholder, Regent Pacific, said yesterday it hoped the review would lead to the break-up it has been calling for over the past year.

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EDITED BY SAMEENA AHMAD

Newcastle has a lot to prove

Wildly fluctuating revenues, spiralling wage costs, rising losses and falling share prices. Welcome to the world of football.

The relationship between football clubs and the City has been turbulent. Attracted by the promise of huge TV revenues and a rapid rise in receipts from selling club strips and memorabilia as clubs clamoured to exploit their brands, investors rushed to buy football shares. But the sector ran away with itself and the football bubble has now burst.

Since Newcastle, the biggest of the recent flood of flotations, came to the market last April, football share prices have plunged by almost one-fifth.

But to shun the whole sector would be a mistake. True, investors have to remember that football is not a conventional, predictable business. Star players come and go and physical injuries can leave share prices ailing. Given the caveats, though, there are gems in the football sector.

Manchester United is one. The club has already shown it is the best in the business at exploiting its brand. Newcastle, too, looks attractive. The company, which yesterday announced a 42 per cent jump in turnover to £41m for the year to July, due to a sharp rise in TV and merchandising revenues, still has a lot to prove after a disappointing flotation. But it has huge potential to follow in the footsteps of Man Utd. Similarly Caspian, which owns Leeds, has good opportunities to increase revenues, selling its brand to a large supported base.

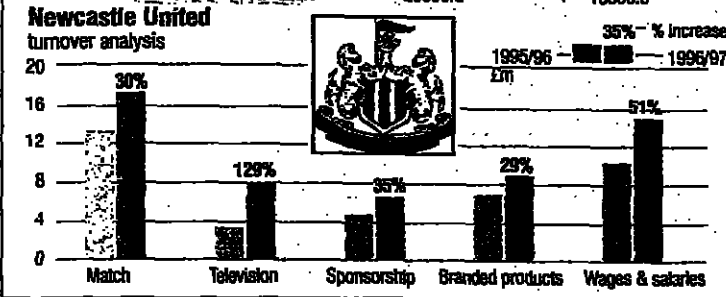
Where it becomes difficult, however, is assessing the fortunes of clubs in real danger of relegation. Southampton, for example, is stuck between a rock and a hard place. Facing the drop from the Premier League, it could try and spend its way out of trouble. However if it fails, it faces a potentially crippling cost base in the First Division.

Investors should also be wary of clubs that tend to yo-yo between the Premier League and the First Division such as Nottingham Forest or Sunderland.

Big clubs can make money. The financial exploitation of the game is still in its infancy and TV revenues could rise to dizzying heights. Potential gains are huge and the most successful clubs will be able to ensure revenues grow com-

The quoted football sector: at a glance

Club	Issue price	Share price 2/4/97	Share price yesterday
Aston Villa	1700.0	1700.0	837.5
Birmingham City	45.5	45.5	46.0
Burnley Leisure (Public)	51.5	51.5	26.5
Casplan (Leeds City)	18.5	18.5	22.5
Castle	8550.0	8550.0	27500.0
Charlton Athletic	80.0	80.0	65.0
Chelsea Village	60.0	60.0	108.5
Hearst	140.0	140.0	108.5
Manchester Utd	77.0	77.0	667.5
Newcastle Utd	135.0	135.0	117.5
Nottingham Forest	70.0	70.0	62.0
Preston North End	550.0	550.0	530.0
Leeds Road (QPR)	72.0	72.0	42.5
Sheffield Utd	88.5	88.5	54.5
Southampton	150.0	150.0	71.5
Sunderland	555.0	555.0	325.0
Tottenham	105.5	105.5	90.0
West Bromwich Albion	2000.0	2000.0	1550.0



fortably faster than players' wages. However the gap between success and failure is widening all the time. Choose carefully and be prepared to stick it out for the long term.

Seton looks a healthy bet

Seton Healthcare will be in rude health if the Labour Government succeeds in making us pay to see our doctors. The prospect of GP consultation fees, which could be a reality by the end of next year, will have us running to our pharmacist, not our doctor, with coughs and colds. That is just what Seton wants. The company says some of the UK's best-known over-the-counter pharmacy brands, such as Woodward's gripe water and Ralgex for pain relief, and makes two-thirds of its sales through pharmacies.

Meanwhile the company's strategy of acquiring brands, using its marketing muscle to negotiate better pricing and pushing the lot through its tightly

run distribution pipeline, continues to pay off. Seton is cutting around £5m of stock in each half year to 1999 to focus on higher value products, which with operational efficiencies from the process will improve margins. Operating margins in the half year to August rose from 19.2 per cent to 23 per cent before exceptional. Seton's cash flow, which had been troubling some observers, also improved as a result of the stock changes, from a negative £2m in the half year last year to a positive £3m free cash flow this time. Less stock meant a slip in sales of consumer products to wholesalers, but retail sales continued to grow at a steady 8 per cent.

The group is maintaining its strong record on acquisitions. Buying Thackeray for £22m in June builds on Seton's position in continence care. With £90m of banking facilities, Seton can continue spending without issuing paper.

Seton has seen no fall in its headline treatment sales since World in Action found organophosphates in such products could make children ill. The company has several phosphate-free treatments anyway. The introduction of Smith & Nephew's Dermagraft

wound healing product in the UK also poses no real threat.

Brokers forecast around £24m for the year. The shares, up 8p to 465.5p, trade on 15 times. Decent value.

Harvey Nash rides the IT wave

Harvey Nash, the IT recruitment company, timed its stock market flotation well. It came to the market in April when the recruitment market was booming and its shares took off. Priced at 175p, they soared to a high of 292.5p in a couple of months.

Like other IT recruitment specialists such as CRT, Delphi and MSB, Harvey Nash has benefited from the trend towards temporary IT staff that the millennium timebomb and growing use of IT in industry has created.

Harvey Nash specialises solely in IT recruitment with its main two divisions handling search and contract services with most jobs in the £30,000 to £60,000-a-year salary band.

But yesterday's half-year announcement - Nash's first figures since flotation - also bore its first real setback.

Though interim profits were up by more than one-third to £2.4m, the strong pound knocked £95,000 off the operating line.

This was due to profits translation from the group's European offices in Germany and Switzerland, some 18 per cent of group sales. This news seemed to catch the City off guard and the group's shares fell 13.5p to 273.5p though the company's joint managing director said the impact should be less severe in the second half.

Going forward, Harvey Nash feels the IT market will remain strong even after the millennium as it moves to place candidates in Internet, intranet and other new media positions within organisations.

Also, millennium-related work accounts for only 5 to 10 per cent of its business, the company says. Harvey Nash is looking at acquisitions, possibly in continental Europe.

With £3m in cash it has the resources, but says if a deal is for more than £8m it may need to issue new shares. On full-year forecasts of £5.1m, the shares trade on a forward multiple of 22. High enough for now.

British shops prepare to accept the euro

The euro could become a "secondary currency" in Britain even if we stay out of the system. *Barrie Clement reports on predictions that many stores will accept the new notes and coins as an alternative to sterling.*

the path to full membership of the system.

Marks & Spencer, one of the UK's leading retailers, is introducing new tills to accept all foreign currencies, but particularly the euro when the system is launched in 1999. The notes and coins will be accepted at all 286 Marks stores throughout Britain and sterling will be given as change.

The new European currency will be in widespread use in the main British shopping centres before it is legal tender in this country, retailers have told the Treasury.

Senior figures in the British Retail Consortium said it would "not be unusual" for the euro to be accepted as legitimate tender in areas which receive visitors from the Continent ahead of any decision by the Government to become part of the currency system.

Directors of some of the most influential stores groups have told ministers that the euro could become a "secondary currency" in Britain and key corporate Treasury officials believe it could smooth

Elizabeth Stanton Jones, director of financial services at the British Retail Consortium, said yesterday that by 2002 cheap software would exist whereby tills could accept euros and give change in sterling. It would be much easier to produce a check-out system to deal with pounds and euros than with sterling and the current proliferation of European currencies.

The best guess of the Government's position is that Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, has decided to stay out of the currency in the first wave, but will consider joining at a later date. However there seems to have been an attempt by the Government to soften up opposition to the principle of the euro.

Some Treasury officials argue that general acceptance of the currency in the busiest shopping areas could lead to a gravitational pull towards its acceptance as legal tender and eventual full membership of the system.

Selfridges, one of London's most famous stores, said it was "ahead of the game". Its shop already accepts 10 foreign currencies and the arrival of the euro will make its life easier rather than more complicated.

Peter Williams, finance director at the store, said the euro would be common currency in parts of Britain whatever the decision of the Government. The minimum standard in a place like Oxford Street in London, which attracts millions of continental visitors, would be the Marks & Spencer option with the acceptance of the euro with change in sterling.

The London Chamber of Commerce applauded the presence of Marks & Spencer and said that smaller retailers were preparing for the new currency but needed to be given a lead by the Government before committing themselves.

Capel rapped for Maxwell dealings

The ghost of Robert Maxwell returned to haunt Capel Cure Myers yesterday as the investment firm was reprimanded and fined £150,000 for serious failings in its mishandling of Mirror Group pension money. *Mike Jones, Capel's chief executive, claims the punishment does not fit the crime. Andrew Verity reports.*

even come from its client - the trustees. The SFA, which declined to name who gave the instructions, said the transfers were often made without written records or proper authority.

Two Capel directors, Tony Pattison and Richard Nead, were singled out for criticism by the SFA. Mr Nead, Capel's compliance officer, had unintentionally given false and misleading information when the SFA investigated the affair.

Mr Pattison was in charge of Mirror Group funds at Capel when money had been transferred without instructions. He also failed to keep track of where it went, the SFA said.

Stock lending arrangements were used to transfer pension money between two Maxwell-backed investment companies, Bishopsgate Investment Management and London & Bishopsgate Investments. It was then used as security for loans to Maxwell's private empire.

Mike Jones, chief executive of Capel, said: "We never engaged in stock-lending but were persuaded to by other SFA counterparts, Lehman Brothers and Credit Suisse. We believed it was temporary which was why better records weren't kept. This punishment doesn't fit the crime by any manner of means."

Framatome says merger with GEC is off

The planned £1bn takeover of Framatome, France's nuclear power station builder, by GEC Alsthom was abandoned yesterday, renewing speculation that the Anglo-French group was on course for flotation.

In an interview with the French newspaper *Le Monde*, the chairman of Framatome, Dominique Vignon, said: "The merger with GEC Alsthom is no longer on the agenda." The apparent collapse of the deal comes just days after Siemens and British Nuclear Fuels announced plans to combine their nuclear expertise.

GEC and Alcatel each own 50 per cent of GEC Alsthom which began talks with Framatome a year ago. However, for the past three months GEC and Alcatel have been examining a £4bn flotation of their joint venture since George Simpson, GEC's managing director, said that was his preferred option.

Alcatel Alsthom owns a 44 per cent stake in Framatome. Asked what it would do with the stake, Mr Vignon said: "Everything will depend on Alcatel's strategy concerning GEC Alsthom." A GEC spokesman yesterday refused to comment on the talks with Alcatel.

— Michael Harrison

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Crest Land & Est (F)	5.95m (8.06m)	1.657m (1.503m)	1.8p (2.0p)	
Harvey Nash Group (F)	4.98m (5.5m)	1.276m (1.202m)	3.36p (3.25p)	2.25p (2.25p)
Harvey Nash Group (F)	23.77m (16.4m)	2.111m (1.788m)	5.23p (4.43p)	1.55p
Midland (F)	- (-)	8108.495 (8532.700)	- 5p (-5p)	
Newcastle Utd (F)	41.1m (42.2m)	8.3m (23.6m)	6.9p (22.8p)	0.5p (nil)
Owen & Robinson (F)	11.61m (11.98m)	402.000 (-2.5m)	-0.44p (-3.37p)	
Saturn Healthcare (F)	53.3m (49.3m)	6.7m (7.9m)	12.6p (10.9p)	3.0p (2.7p)
Upson & Saunders (F)	11.84m (8.95m)	423.000 (207.000)	0.20p (0.14p)	nil
Wisham (F)	153.5m (158.6m)	16.000 (11.12m)	0.15p (2.59p)	1.0p (1.0p)

(F) - Final (P) - Interim

Redland 'white knights' rule themselves out

Two leading building materials companies, Holderbank and Wienerberger, yesterday counted themselves out as white knights to rescue Redland, under siege from a £1.7bn bid from French group Lafarge.

Holderbank, based in Jona, Switzerland, and Vienna-based Wienerberger had been tipped as suitors, but both said they were not interested in buying all

or part of Redland's aggregates or roof tiles operations. Minoro also yesterday dismissed weekend press reports that it was a likely white knight. These join RMC, Tarmac, Pioneer and Hanson, who have all indicated they would not be interested in making a full bid.

The news suggests proposals for a break up is Redland's best defence. Interest in Red-

land's aggregates business is likely to be greater than for the whole group while the German Brass family, which owns 43.5 per cent of RBB Redland's roof tiles business, is understood to be considering an offer for Redland's stake.

Lafarge has taken a 39 per cent shareholding in a Spanish cement company.

— Sameena Ahmad

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Brown's EMU confusion clouds first day of order-driven trading

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN
STOCK
MARKET
REPORTER
OF THE YEAR

For black red brown Monday as the widely signalled crash failed to occur and Chancellor Gordon Brown's muddle over EMU clouded the launch of the Stock Exchange's order-driven trading system.

In a quiet, uneasy session trading was light with many dealers reluctant to get too deeply involved in the new order. After the often chaotic rehearsal many adopted a gently, gently approach and kept trading to the minimum.

There was still considerable footsie dealing on the order book with traders continuing to use the traditional market-makers whose spread, in the main, was in line with order prices.

Mr Brown's confusion over EMU was seen in some quarters as something of a blessing in disguise. The threatened Black Monday scenario actu-

ally prompted institutions, suffering acute discomfort over the Government's somersault, to stay on the sidelines rather than run the risk of getting caught up in frenzied activity in an unfamiliar market.

Even so, in the first few minutes after Mr Brown launched the new order, there were very real fears the stock market faced another Black Monday on the 10th anniversary of the great crash.

In the event it was a Brown Monday, Footsie ended 60.1 points down at 5,211. It was at one time off 118.8.

New York's recent weakness, tribulations in the Far East, with Hong Kong showing distinct signs of a bear run, and anniversary jitters indicated the market would face a tricky session with or without Mr Brown and order-driven trading.

"Under the old system New York and the Far East would have given the market-makers a chance to bash hell out of the market - and they would have done so," observed one trader.

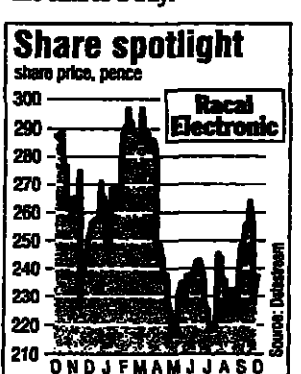
A few blue chips were suspended (for 10 minutes); they included Imperial Chemical Industries and Railtrack. But there were no spaghetti-finger inputs.

After the careful start the order book should, if its instigators have read the scene correctly, gradually gather up much of the Footsie trade still going through market-makers. But it seems old-style trading will be a significant part of the market for some considerable time.

Yesterday's moderate trading means the system has yet to face a severe test. It has still to contend with a determined

bull, or bear, run and frantic trading in a single share.

ICI could provide the single stock examination. Third-quarter figures on Thursday may present a problem. The shares slipped a further 3p to 946.5p. Stockbroker Sutherland's is looking for 950p, below many other forecasts. But analyst Martin Evans rates the shares a buy.



Rascal Electronic was little changed at 230p. Henderson Crosthwaite suggest a break-out value of 320p. Rascal's telecom arm is known to be up for sale and there is talk it would listen to offers for its data products division.

After Friday's excitement financials had a more subdued session although Commercial Union stretched to yet another peak, up 7p to 883p. Hambros, the merchant bank, gained 12p to 270.5p. It supported break-up rumours by appointing Schroders to review the group. The Hong Kong set-back hit HSBC 43p to 1,916p.

Some retailers were pushed higher by comments by retail consultant Verdict Research. J Sainsbury led the blue-chip leader board, up 10.5p to 476p. Dixons, 14.5p to 694p, and Next, 11p to

727p, were among others singled out. BAT Industries, on a UBS buy, added 4p to 589p.

Sterling's bounce hit exporters. Bahma, an environmental engineer, is the latest to complain about the pound. The shares faded 8.5p to 129p after a warning the sterling cost would be around £2m in the first half year.

Family-controlled Peel, the property group, fell 55p to 67.5p after dismissing weekend talk of takeover action. Scotch whisky distiller Burn Stewart weakened 5p to 48.5p as bid talk evaporated.

Middlesex, the metal group with extensive interests in the former Soviet Union, hardened to 8.25p after Russian group Rao Gazprom said it planned to spend \$25m buying into the group. Its long-term intention is a 25 per cent interest.

TAKING STOCK

Freeport Leisure, running shopping and leisure villages, could be on the verge of getting a 20-acre site near Leeds which already has outline consent for retailing. It runs three centres and has a site awaiting planning permission. The shares rose 5p to 198.5p, a peak.

Dean Corporation, the builder and property manager, held at 15p. A group controlled by First Shanghai Investments of Hong Kong is taking a 20.32 per cent stake as part of a £24m cash-raising exercise which includes an open offer. The company plans a full listing.

WPP, the advertising giant, continues to build its stake at CIA, the media buyer. It has gathered in another 400,000 shares, taking its holding to 13.46 per cent. CIA held at 171.5p.

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Alcoholic Beverages							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Banks, Merchant							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Banks, Retail							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Breweries Pubs & Rest							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Building Construction							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Chemicals							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Consumer Goods							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Electronics							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Engineering							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Food Producers							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Gas Distribution							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Health Care							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Household Goods							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Insurance							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
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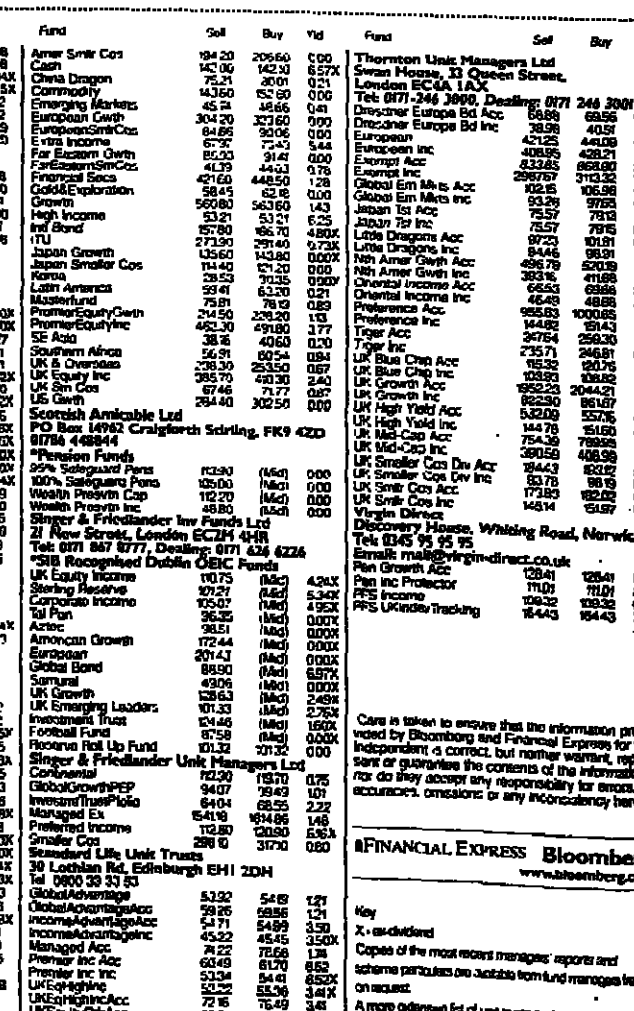
52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Investment Trusts							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Life Assurance							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Media							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
Oil & Gas							
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5
20 480	140.00	130.00	Guinness	135.00	-1.00	4.5	28.5

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	PERC
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Radio firms may bid to run national digital service

Emap Radio, Capital Radio and DMG Radio are in talks with NTL, the cable operator, about forming a consortium to bid for the right to run national digital radio services. Cathy Newman looks at what digital radio has to offer and assesses its chances of success.

The four parties have signed an agreement to explore the possibilities of bidding for the national commercial licence when it is advertised next spring. The licence, or multiplex, will carry between six and nine channels and will begin broadcasting in 1999. The three national commercial stations - Virgin Radio, Classic FM and Talk Radio - are guaranteed space on the multiplex, but roughly six channels will be available for new services.

A source at one of the companies involved in the potential consortium said: "We believe the best way to progress digital radio is to put our shoulders to the wheel together." Emap, Capital and DMG, which is part of the Daily Mail and General Trust, could be keen to get involved in digital broadcasting as none of their stations is guaranteed any space on the national multiplex.

Tim Schoonmaker, chief executive of Emap Radio, would not comment on the talks, but said: "Emap is looking at digital radio both nationally and locally."

NTL, which earlier this year failed to win the licence to run digital terrestrial television services, is already running a trial digital radio service in London. Classic FM has also secured a trial licence in the capital, and is thought likely to pitch against the Emap consortium for the national multiplex. Other interested bidders could include Castle Transmission, and even supermarkets and banks, which would use the digital radio spectrum to transmit data.

The BBC, which has been trialling digital radio services for some time, will be awarded the only other national licence, which it will use to broadcast its five radio stations using digital technology. It will also develop some new services.

The two national multiplexes are to be advertised by the Radio Authority next spring and bids will be due in June. A series of local licences, each carrying up to nine channels, will also be on offer next year. Up to 30 local licences may be up for grabs, with major centres such as London getting two or more licences.

Digital radio could see the launch of around 500 channels in total. There are currently 230 radio stations in the UK. Apologists for the new medium wax lyrical about digital radio's CD quality sound, which will make a huge difference for stations broadcasting on AM at the moment.

But for Neil Blackley, media analyst at Merrill Lynch, CD quality sound is only one element of digital radio's appeal. "It's not just going to be digital radio; it's going to

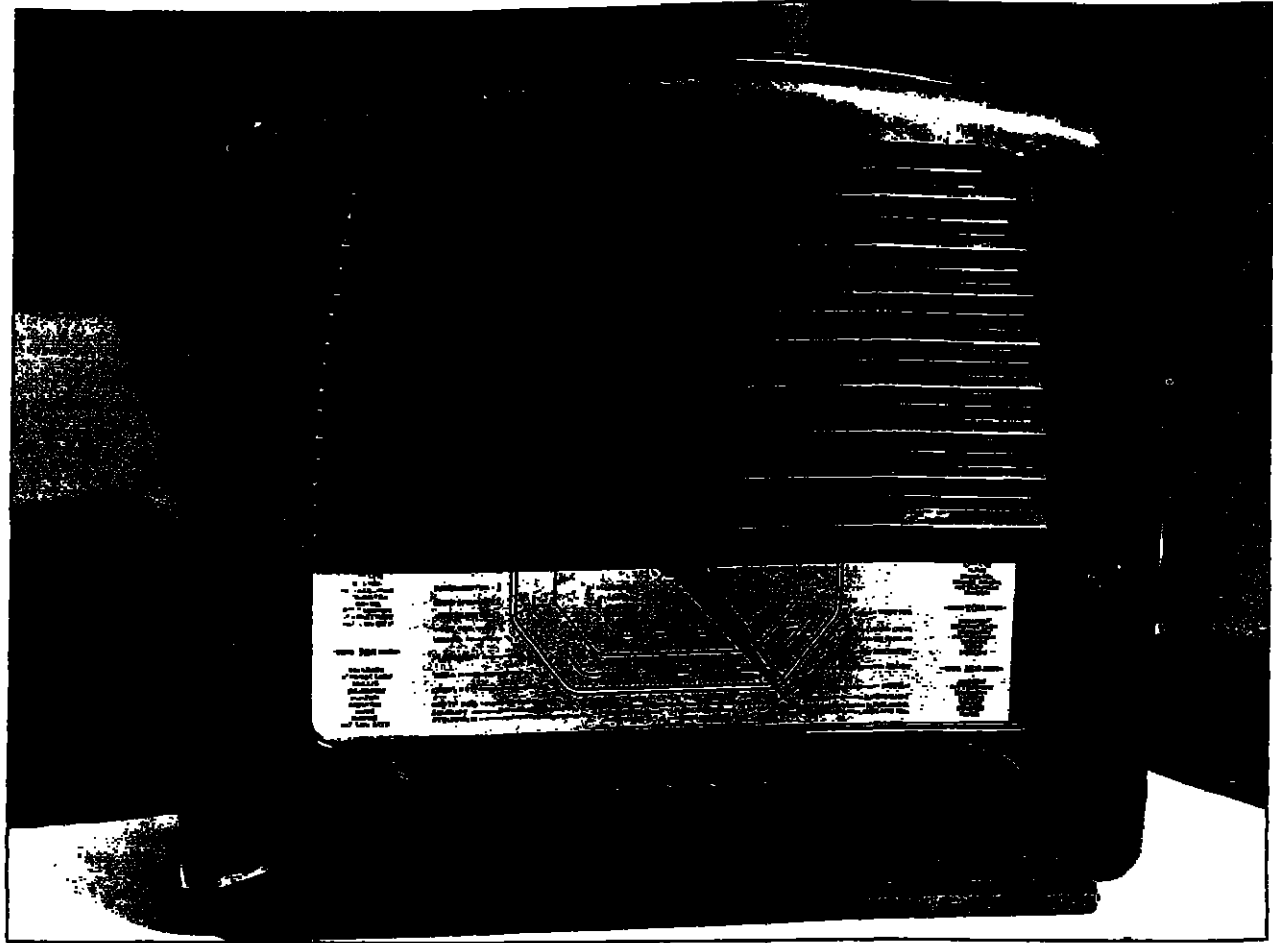
be a communications package," he said. A paging capability could, for example, be built into digital receivers, so users could pick up messages in their car or whenever they switched on the radio.

Digital receivers will have a five-inch colour screen, which will allow transmission of data and, mainly, static images. Scheduling information could be provided, for example, or pictures of the musician whose music is being played.

Some observers such as Bruce Fireman, a director of Guinness Mahon who specialises in media, say digital technology will eventually enable radio operators to make money not only from advertising but also from subscriptions. Special interest stations or programmes, which are at the moment refused space on the analogue spectrum, could be funded entirely by subscription revenues. "You could subscribe, for example, to The Fishing Programme," Mr Fireman said. "Digital liberates the broadcaster from a reliance on advertising sales."

Although broadcasters may get excited by the opportunities digital radio affords, the cost of receivers is sobering and could limit the success of the new medium. The first receivers went on sale in Kingston over a year ago with a price-tag of £2,500. The price has now come down to around £500, but receivers are still not readily available over the counter. Major high-street retailers are thought likely to start selling the sets in time for Christmas 1999.

The Radio Authority believes receivers



Wired for sound: First it was AM, then it was FM and now it is digital. Radios have some a long way in a few decades

will eventually be available for £200 - the same price as a set-top box for digital television services.

Despite the views of digital evangelists such as Mr Fireman and Mr Blackley, some radio operators are distinctly more cautious. Richard Huntingford, chief executive of

Chrysalis Radio, says: "What everyone is still searching for is what's going to be the driver of this new technology."

Mr Huntingford claims digital radio does not have a unique selling point, unlike other new technologies of the past few decades, such as compact discs.

The investment incentives are also limited. Although the Radio Authority has promised local and regional stations an extension of their eight-year licences if they invest in digital, broadcasting a single analogue service on digital could cost in the region of £2m.

Watchdogs to investigate competing US bids for MCI

British Telecom's hopes of salvaging a place in a three-way US alliance could face a six-month delay following intervention by competition regulators, lawyers warned yesterday. As Chris Godsmark, Business Correspondent, reports, rival phone groups have voiced complaints to competition watchdogs about the two competing US bids for MCI, BT's American merger partner.

It emerged last night that the US Department of Justice (DoJ), the main anti-trust regulator, had amassed a substantial team of experts to investigate the two rival bids for MCI. The DoJ has already begun probes into WorldCom's \$30bn (£18.5bn) all-share approach for MCI and last week's \$28bn cash offer from GTE. They have leapfrogged BT's revised \$24bn bid, which was recently cleared by US regulators. US competition lawyers yesterday cast serious doubt on

claims by both US bidders that they would complete any regulatory hurdles by next spring. Launching his offer for MCI, Bernard Ebbers, WorldCom's president, said he was confident the merger could be completed "no later than the first quarter of 1998".

Chuck Lee, GTE chairman, followed suit last week, claiming the company could "complete this transaction in the same time frame as contemplated in the WorldCom proposal".

However lawyers acting for companies hostile to the two merger plans said they expected the DoJ to take at least six months, and up to a year, to reach a decision on the bids. The delay would further complicate matters for BT, which is this week expected to start talks with GTE and WorldCom, which analysts predicted could lead to a three-way link-up.

BT is known to prefer a deal with GTE rather than WorldCom, but lawyers also warned the DoJ was likely to find the GTE merger plan harder to approve. Bob Burke, a competition expert with attorneys Foley & Lardner in Washington, said: "Both transactions are extremely complicated. The GTE proposal creates more issues than the WorldCom one and is probably more difficult."

The DoJ investigation is likely to focus on concerns that GTE and WorldCom, which have extensive local networks, would route all their long-distance traffic across MCI's phone lines after a merger.

Rival companies will argue that the DoJ should force the bidders to send calls across the cheapest long-distance network, regardless of ownership issues. Separately yesterday speculation intensified that AT&T would consider launching a bid for GTE when the phones giant confirmed the appointment of Michael Armstrong, the chairman of Hughes Electronics, as chairman and chief executive.

AT&T had been hunting for a chairman since the surprise departure in July of John Walter, chief executive and chairman designate.

Mr Walter parted company with AT&T after just nine months in the job when he was told the company's board did not want him to succeed Robert Allen as chairman.

Mr Armstrong gave no hints yesterday about his strategy, insisting it would be "several months" before he got used to the job.

However analysts said the appointment would end a three-month period of uncertainty at AT&T.

Volatility the order of the day as Sets gets off to shaky start

Technical glitches and market nerves about EMU and the 10th anniversary of Black Monday meant the Stock Exchange's new order-driven trading system got off to a bumpy start yesterday. As Lea Paterson reports, some in the City believe market volatility may be here to stay.

Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, pressed the button to launch the Stock Exchange Electronic Trading Service (Sets), at 8.30am yesterday only to see the FTSE 100 index drop by 40 points immediately. Ten minutes later it was languishing almost 120 points down, before closing at 5,211, a fall of 60 points on the day.

"Volatility is going to be a feature of this market from now on," said Martin Lupton of Dresner Kleinwort Benson.

The launch of Sets, known as Big Bang II, means that, for most trades in FTSE 100 stocks, market-makers do not quote a spread of prices over the telephone, but rather input prices on buy and sell transactions into an electronic order book.

The move was essential "to keep ahead of the competition", according to Gavin Casey, the Stock Exchange's chief executive.

Technical glitches, though, marred the move to Sets for some dealers. A few firms were unable to use the new system for short periods during the morning, being forced instead to rely on other information providers, such as Reuters. However, the Stock Exchange insisted that its members had made "a very smooth transition" to Sets.

Increased volatility in the FTSE 100, a feature of recent dress rehearsals, persisted yesterday. Many market-makers believed that speculation over EMU was not the only factor, attributing at least some of the volatility to the relatively thin order book. "Volatility will decrease the deeper and the more liquid the order book becomes," said Richard Balakins of BZW.

Some believe that market volatility is here to stay. One reason, according to Mr Lupton, is that dealers can now trade "baskets" of all FTSE 100 stocks simultaneously, a move that can cause large swings in the index. During Mr Brown's speech as he launched Sets, the market dropped by 76 points in only a few seconds, a fall attributed to a basket trade.

Market report, page 25

Landhurst chiefs jailed for corruption

Ted Ball, founder and former chairman of Landhurst Leasing, was sentenced to three years in jail at the Old Bailey yesterday for his part in a £50m fraud. His deputy, David Ashworth, got 18 months in jail, and the duo were disqualified as company directors for eight years and six years respectively.

Sentencing them, Mr Justice Henry Pownall said the pair had "damaged the name of the leasing industry".

Ball, 55, and Ashworth, 45,

built up a successful leasing operation in the 1980s but started deceiving their bankers when they bought the Brabham Formula One racing team in 1990 for £1m. Two years later Ball's "obsession" with motor racing had led them to pump millions more into Brabham, in return for corrupt cash payments.

Landhurst Leasing's banks sent investigating accountants into the company in 1992 and the web of deceit was discovered. The company was put into

liquidation and three years later the Serious Fraud Office arrested and charged the two with corruption. Ball and Ashworth changed their pleas to guilty last month, admitting they had taken thousands of pounds as kickbacks between March and September 1990.

The banks were entitled to trust the information they were given, Mr Justice Pownall said yesterday, a reference to the duo's extensive habit of "book-keeping the books" when Land-

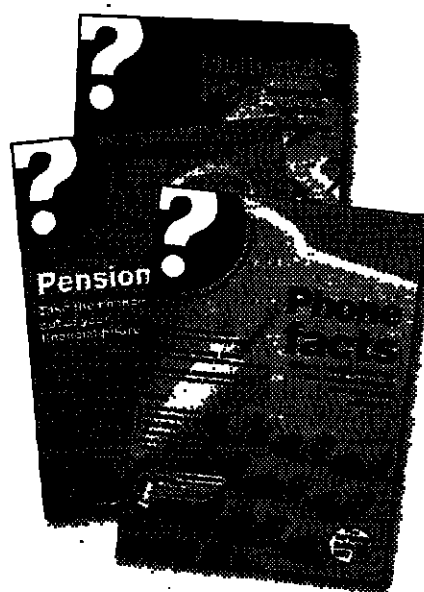
hurst ran short of cash. Just by buying Brabham they had broken banking covenants.

The judge told the pair: "You have ruined your reputations and deeply hurt those nearest and dearest to you."

Tim Langdale QC, prosecuting for the SFO, said: "Ball and Ashworth took full, dishonest advantage of their controlling positions at Landhurst for personal gain... it was simple old-fashioned greed."

John Wilcock

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All-rounder Ogea reels in Marlins' lead

The battle for supremacy in baseball's World Series is just two games old, but, as Rupert Cornwell reports, a fascinating duel is developing nicely.

Thus far, mission accomplished for the Cleveland Indians. Masterly hitting by Marquis Grissom, and the clinically efficient Indians bullpen dispatched the Florida Marlins in Miami on Sunday night, to send the World Series back to Cleveland tonight perfectly poised at one game apiece.

The Indians of Game Two were unrecognisable from the team drubbed 7-4 in the Series opener. The Marlins had their chances, including four doubles, but could not cash in: "We just couldn't get the big hit," the Florida manager, Jim Leyland, said of his team's 6-1 defeat.

As he also acknowledged, though, the Marlins could not find a way round Cleveland starter Chad Ogea, who gave up seven hits but just a single run at the bottom of the first, in 6 2/3 innings. Then it was over and out as the Indians bullpen wrapped up matters. Jose Mesa and company have held first Baltimore and now Florida scoreless over the last 10 innings. Of such statistics are world championships made.

But it was a bellwether night for the Indians hitters too - 14 hits in all and a decisive five-run explosion in the middle innings. The big blast was a two-run homer by Sandy Alomar in the sixth. In the fifth, however, Ogea proved he could bat as well as pitch.

Only in the batting line-up because of the no-designated hitter rule applying for World Series games, Ogea laid down



Kevin Brown, the Marlins pitcher, can only watch as a hit from Bip Roberts secures two runs for the victorious Indians on Sunday

Photograph: Reuters

a deft bunt to move two runners over. One out later, both scored on Bip Roberts' dribbled single into centre field. "I was lucky. I was just trying to get a bit of the bat on the ball," Roberts confessed later. "It was like the ball had eyes."

No such flukiness clouded the Marquis Grissom show. On Sunday, baseball's current

"Mr October" hit safely in three of four at-bats, bringing his World Series average to .441 (26 for 59) - a mark unmatched by any batter in World Series history with at least 50 at-bats.

Grissom is also riding a 14-game hitting streak in the Series, stretching back to his 1995 and 1996 appearances with the Atlanta Braves. Only Hank

Bauer of the New York Yankees, with a 17-game streak stands ahead of him.

In a best-of-seven series, of course, it ain't over till it's over. But such as they are, the odds are starting to accumulate in Cleveland's favour. Without a world championship since 1948, the Tribe feels its hour has come. As in over-

coming New York and Baltimore on their way to the American League pennant, the Indians lost the first game, only to bounce back at once.

Now the Marlins must fight the elements too. They face the 50-degree chill of the Great Lakes in autumn, and the "wall of sound" that is Jacob's Field. The first two games in Mi-

ami each drew 67,000-plus spectators, the largest World Series crowds in 34 years, and half as many again as the 42,000 who will gather in the "The Jake." But, the Indians slugger Matt Williams confessed, "I don't know the difference between the decibels. I think the Cleveland crowd is louder and I hope that helps."

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

Broncos rushed off their feet by Napoleon

The Oakland Raiders upset the AFC powerhouse Denver Broncos 28-25, dashing their hopes of a seventh successive win at the start of a season for the first time in their history.

Oakland took the lead for good in the third quarter of Sunday's game when the Raiders defender Lance Johnson rammed the Denver quarterback John Elway from behind, forcing him to fumble. Eric Turner picked the ball up and dashed 65 yards to the end-zone to gain a 21-17 advantage.

Then Napoleon Kaufman, who rushed for 217 yards, burst through the Denver line for an 83-yard touchdown late in the fourth quarter. The Broncos replied with Elway hitting the wide receiver Ed McCaffrey for a 29-yard touchdown, and Terrell Davis ran in the two-point conversion, but Denver failed to stop Oakland on their next possession and time ran out.

The New York Jets coach, Bill Parcells, called up his reserve quarterback Glenn Foley, who led the club to a 24-19 upset of the AFC East leaders, New England, as Parcells gained revenge against the team he took to the Super Bowl last season.

In Texas, Herschel Walker caught a late 64-yard touchdown pass to give Dallas a 26-22 win over AFC Central leaders, Jacksonville Jaguars, who now drop into a tie for first place with Pittsburgh, who hammered Cincinnati 26-10.

Philadelphia beat Arizona 13-10 in an NFC East clash, with Chris Boniol driving in a 38-yard field goal to send the game into overtime, then hitting a 24-yarder to win it.

The San Francisco 49ers continued their mastery of the NFC West with a 35-28 victory in Atlanta, while Carolina gave the New Orleans Saints their first shut-out in 14 years with a 13-0 win in Louisiana.

NFL: Atlanta 28 San Francisco 35; Dallas 26 Jacksonville 22; New Orleans 13 Carolina 13; New York Jets 24 New England 19; Philadelphia 13 Arizona 10 (AP); St Louis 9 Seattle 17; Tennessee 28 Washington 10; Denver 21 Miami 24; Cleveland 10 Pittsburgh 22; Detroit 20 New York Giants 25 (AP); Oakland 28 Denver 25.		Seattle 4 3 0 134 143	
Oakland 3 4 0 143 173		San Diego 3 4 0 106 157	
NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE		W L T PF PA	
EASTERN DIVISION		W L T PF PA	
NY Giants 5 3 0 27 53		Dallas 4 3 0 186 118	
Washington 4 3 0 125 117		Philadelphia 3 4 0 140 147	
Arizona 1 6 0 118 144		CENTRAL DIVISION	
W L T PF PA		W L T PF PA	
Green Bay 5 2 0 198 149		Minnesota 5 2 0 176 155	
Tampa Bay 4 4 0 140 134		Chicago 4 4 0 180 165	
Pittsburgh 3 4 0 174 157		WESTERN DIVISION	
W L T PF PA		W L T PF PA	
San Francisco 4 1 0 327 98		St Louis 2 5 0 175 159	
New Orleans 2 6 0 118 175		Atlanta 1 6 0 132 168	

PHILIPS



Today we publish the latest results of The Independent Fantasy Football League. The player scores are for all games played up to 19 October, while the league table includes all scores up to 12 October. Also today we publish this month's winner. Mr P Nicol of Solihull with his team Rotor Blossomfield scored 229 points and wins a pair of tickets to England's next international at Wembley.

Every time one of your players score you get four points. There are four points for a keeper or a defender every time their team keeps a clean sheet. If a player scores the winning goal, i.e. if there is a one goal difference in the scoreline, the player scoring the final goal for the winning team is awarded 1 bonus point awarded in addition to standard goal related points. Each successful Assist, a pass given by our experts to lead directly to a goal, will give a player 3 points. The opinion of our experts on the matter is final. Each player selected and starting a game will be awarded one point.

If a player is given a Yellow Card they lose 1 point, if a player is given a Red Card they lose 3 points. Own goals, either scored or conceded, do not count.

The Premiership Manager that you choose will be awarded 3 points if their real-life team wins, 1 point is awarded if they draw and no points are given if they lose.

Updated player scores and league tables will be published every Tuesday in The Independent and repeated the following Sunday in the Independent on Sunday.

HOW TO SCORE	
player score	4
clean sheet	4
winning goal	1
successful assist	3
yellow card	-1
red card	-3
manager's team wins	3
draw	1
loss	0

INDEPENDENT FANTASY FOOTBALL

OVERALL SCORE CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 8 AUGUST - 19 OCTOBER

LEAGUE TABLE				GOALKEEPERS				DEFENDERS				MIDFIELDERS				STRIKERS				MANAGERS			
POS	NAME	TEAM	POINTS	NAME	TEAM	PTS	VAL	NAME	TEAM	PTS	VAL	NAME	TEAM	PTS	VAL	NAME	TEAM	PTS	VAL	NAME	TEAM	PTS	VAL
1	Mr Chris King	Seeking Victory	439	301 Seaman	ARS	5	31 40	456 Cox	BOL	0	6 25	363 Scales	TOT	0	15 30	481 Rubens	LEE	4	20 15	447 Sealed	COV	0	12 15
1	Mr Phil Tuff	Pin Ups 4	439	302 Laloc	ARS	0	0 10	457 Elliot	BOL	0	1 30	364 Campbell	TOT	4	22 40	482 Haisland	LEE	1	6 25	448 Lightburne	COV	0	1 15
1	Mr David Evans	Bootham Old Boys	439	303 Mumming	ARS	0	0 30	458 Liggins	BOL	0	1 15	365 Austin	TOT	0	15 30	483 Parker	LEE	0	7 15	449 Dier	CRY	0	14 20
1	Mr John Cox	Southville FC	439	304 Booch	AV	0	2 10	459 Bainsford	BOL	1	20 15	366 Austin	TOT	0	15 30	484 Taylor	LEE	0	16 15	450 Freeman	CRY	0	14 20
5	Mr B Srai	Simply the Best	433	305 Oakes	AV	0	2 10	460 Dubery	CHE	0	15 30	367 Edinburgh	TOT	1	14 16	485 Beck	LEE	0	16 15	451 Freeman	CRY	0	14 20
5	Mr B Srai	The Unconquered	427	306 Watson	BAK	0	11 10	461 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	368 Carr	TOT	1	26 12	486 Lennox	LEE	1	8 12	452 Shirley	CRY	1	2 10
5	Mr Stewart Scott	The Dream Team	427	307 Loose	BAK	0	1 10	462 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	369 MacIntyre	TOT	0	16 15	487 Ward	LEE	1	21 17	453 Ward	CRY	1	3 20
6	Mr David Anson	Bill Boys 2nd II	426	308 Flowers	BLA	5	23 52	463 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	370 Decks	WH	0	15 30	488 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	454 Ward	CRY	1	3 20
6	Mr Stewart Scott	Unbeatable	426	309 Flowers	BLA	5	23 52	464 LeVande	WH	0	15 30	371 Rasper	WH	0	12 17	489 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	455 Ward	CRY	1	3 20
6	Mr David Baker	Dead Beat	425	310 Flowers	BLA	5	23 52	465 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	372 Ward	WH	0	12 17	490 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	456 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
9	Mr Martin Pawley	Roberts Rovers	424	311 Bransford	BOL	1	22 12	466 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	373 Hall	WH	0	15 30	491 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	457 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
11	Mr Chris Thomas	Southorpe Extras	424	312 De Grey	CHE	0	0 10	467 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	374 Hall	WH	0	15 30	492 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	458 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
11	Mr Archer	No Wright	423	313 Grosse	CHE	0	0 10	468 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	375 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	493 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	459 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
11	Miss Lisa Wild	Amerisco	423	314 Ograsovic	COV	0	26 22	469 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	376 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	494 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	460 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
16	Mr Michael Richard	Aller Lambeg	420	315 Hayden	CRY	0	0 10	470 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	377 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	495 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	461 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
16	Mr Mike Mitchell	Enduring Light	419	316 Nash	CRY	0	0 10	471 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	378 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	496 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	462 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
16	Mr G Whitehead	The Green Team	418	317 James	CRY	0	0 15	472 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	379 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	497 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	463 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
16	Mr P Green	Powis Rangers	416	318 Warner	LIV	0	0 10	473 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	380 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	498 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	464 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
16	Mr Ken Boyle	Clogston Rovers	416	319 Schepard	LIV	0	0 10	474 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	381 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	499 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	465 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
16	Mr G Bell	Stunning Stars	416	320 Van Der Grem	MAN	0	0 10	475 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	382 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	500 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	466 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
21	Mr K Brady	The Final Selection	415	321 Galt	NEW	1	24 25	476 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	383 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	501 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	467 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
21	Mr E Gromley	Celtic Warriors	415	322 Halvay	NEW	1	24 25	477 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	384 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	502 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	468 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr Trevor Rans	Sanny's Soccer Scorchers	413	323 Preston	SHEF	0	0 10	478 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	385 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	503 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	469 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr Killeary	Killer Bees	412	324 Taylor	SOU	0	0 18	479 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	386 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	504 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	470 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr M McClochin	Washed Up Army	412	325 Beacom	SOU	0	0 18	480 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	387 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	505 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	471 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr David	Botham Botham United	410	326 Walker	TOT	0	0 10	481 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	388 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	506 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	472 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr Abdul Choudi	Nickies 9th II	410	327 Bardon	TOT	0	0 10	482 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	389 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	507 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	473 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr A Reynolds	The Hedghogs	409	328 Midwell	WIM	1	17 27	483 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	390 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	508 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	474 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr Tom Lyons	Tom's Pocket Battle Ships	409	329 Sullivan	WIM	1	17 27	484 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	391 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	509 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	475 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr J McCrosser	Washed Up Army	407	400 Dixon	ARS	0	18 25	485 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	392 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	510 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	476 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr A Cunningham	The Zebras	407	401 Upton	ARS	0	18 25	486 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	393 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	511 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	477 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr A Storness	Boop Barp Poo	406	402 Pini	ARS	0	36 42	487 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	394 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	512 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	478 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr Steven Man	Roberts Rovers	406	403 Grynolds	ARS	4	21 57	488 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	395 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	513 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	479 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr David Baker	Deja Vu	405	404 Winsterton	ARS	4	21 57	489 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	396 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	514 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	480 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr Chris Thomas	Scamthorpe Special Res	404	405 Bould	ARS	5	22 55	490 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	397 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	515 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	481 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr A Wengrow	Donny's Demons	403	406 Grynolds	ARS	5	22 55	491 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	398 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	516 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	482 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr Tom Lyons	Wash For Short	403	407 Bould	ARS	5	22 55	492 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	399 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	517 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	483 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
23	Mr Tony Brazier	Golden Moons	402	408 Grynolds	ARS	5	22 55	493 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	400 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	518 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	484 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25
41	Mr Robin Johnson			409 Bould	ARS	5	22 55	494 Perpetua	CHE	0	15 30	401 Pugs	WH	5	8 30	519 Hume	NEW	1	11 30	485 Sturridge	BAR	0	6 25

Xaar's reign looks unassailable

Saturday's Racing Post Trophy is the last of the year's important examinations for juveniles, but, as Richard Edmondson reflects, it is going to take a truly exceptional performance for the winner to have any chance of dislodging Xaar as the season's top two-year-old.

It is to repeat itself this autumn then racing aficionados will know they have finally relocated the Shangri-la of the early 1970s, when Brigadier Gerard and Mill Reef were submitted brilliantly in the same crop. In truth, though, whatever succeeds at Doncaster on Saturday will need the assistance of rocketry to compare with the achievement posted by Xaar down Newmarket's straight at the weekend.

After two days in laboratory conditions, Matthew Tester, the British Horseracing Board's handicapper of two-year-olds, yesterday emerged with a rating of 127 for Xaar, which officially makes him the best winner of the Dewhurst since El Gran Senor in 1983. Since then, the only two-year-olds to be rated higher are Arazi and Celtic Swing, and even the memory of

their subsequent disappointment cannot draw from the excitement Xaar has generated. It is assumed that those connected to the French colt merely have to practise their public speaking this winter in preparation for the microphone on the 2,000 Guineas podium and two-year-old of 1978, but was beaten in the Craven the following year and then retired.

If an overpowering display is to be evidenced at Town Moor on Saturday it is likely to come from Second Empire, the 2,000 Guineas ante-post second favourite. Aidan O'Brien's colt has yet to be confirmed as a definite runner however, and is one of three inmates from Ballydoyle among the 12 acceptors left in yesterday. O'Brien, who also has the Dewhurst third, Impressionist, in the field, has already indicated that Saturday's Curragh winner Saratoga Springs is an intended runner at Doncaster.

One colt who has to perform with distinction to justify his inclusion is Mudeer, who has been supplemented into the race at a cost of £15,000. His owners, Godolphin, won the contest last year with another late entry, Medaly. Henry Cecil, who has won the Racing Post Trophy nine times, relies on Craigie at this time and his fellow Newmarket trainers Michael Stoute and Alec Stewart are represented by KEE-manjaro and Metastorm respectively. Metastorm had been a consideration for the Dewhurst, but was removed from that assignment when Stewart gauged the strength of the opposition.

James Toller will scan the possible rivals to Duck Row before committing the Duke of Devonshire's colt to battle. If Toller does not like what he sees on the team sheet he will reroute Duck Row to Friday's Horris Hill Stakes at Newbury. More definite noises have been emanating from Sean Woods, who intends to partici-

RACING'S FUTURES MARKET

Following his seven-length victory in Saturday's Group One Dewhurst Stakes over seven furlongs at Newmarket on Saturday, Xaar is now a top-priced 6-4 favourite with Coral for the 2,000 Guineas on Saturday.

Dewhurst disappointment Daggert Drawn is out to 25-1 with Ladbrokes.

Xaar, whose pedigree and pace suggest he would be a remarkable colt indeed were he to prove as effective at a mile and a half as he is at seven furlongs, is a top-priced 10-1 with Coral for the Derby.

— Ian Davies

1998 2,000 Guineas Stakes (1m)

Place	Colt	Weight	Time	Owner
1	Xaar	11.5	1:00.0	Godolphin
2	Second Empire	11.5	1:01.0	Godolphin
3	Impressionist	11.5	1:02.0	Godolphin
4	Mudeer	11.5	1:03.0	Godolphin
5	Saratoga Springs	11.5	1:04.0	Godolphin
6	Metastorm	11.5	1:05.0	Godolphin
7	Kee-manjaro	11.5	1:06.0	Godolphin
8	Medaly	11.5	1:07.0	Godolphin
9	Impressionist	11.5	1:08.0	Godolphin
10	Mudeer	11.5	1:09.0	Godolphin

1998 1,000 Guineas Stakes (1m)

Place	Colt	Weight	Time	Owner
1	Xaar	11.5	1:00.0	Godolphin
2	Second Empire	11.5	1:01.0	Godolphin
3	Impressionist	11.5	1:02.0	Godolphin
4	Mudeer	11.5	1:03.0	Godolphin
5	Saratoga Springs	11.5	1:04.0	Godolphin
6	Metastorm	11.5	1:05.0	Godolphin
7	Kee-manjaro	11.5	1:06.0	Godolphin
8	Medaly	11.5	1:07.0	Godolphin
9	Impressionist	11.5	1:08.0	Godolphin
10	Mudeer	11.5	1:09.0	Godolphin

1998 Derby Stakes (1m 4f 10yds)

Place	Colt	Weight	Time	Owner
1	Xaar	11.5	2:30.0	Godolphin
2	Second Empire	11.5	2:31.0	Godolphin
3	Impressionist	11.5	2:32.0	Godolphin
4	Mudeer	11.5	2:33.0	Godolphin
5	Saratoga Springs	11.5	2:34.0	Godolphin
6	Metastorm	11.5	2:35.0	Godolphin
7	Kee-manjaro	11.5	2:36.0	Godolphin
8	Medaly	11.5	2:37.0	Godolphin
9	Impressionist	11.5	2:38.0	Godolphin
10	Mudeer	11.5	2:39.0	Godolphin

RESULTS

PLUMPTON

2.20: 1. REACH THE CLOUDS (R) 11.5, 2. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 3. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 4. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 5. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 6. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 7. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 8. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 9. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 10. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5.

RESULTS

PLUMPTON

2.20: 1. REACH THE CLOUDS (R) 11.5, 2. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 3. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 4. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 5. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 6. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 7. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 8. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 9. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 10. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5.

RESULTS

PLUMPTON

2.20: 1. REACH THE CLOUDS (R) 11.5, 2. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 3. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 4. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 5. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 6. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 7. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 8. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 9. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 10. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5.

RESULTS

PLUMPTON

2.20: 1. REACH THE CLOUDS (R) 11.5, 2. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 3. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 4. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 5. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 6. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 7. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 8. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 9. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 10. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5.

RESULTS

PLUMPTON

2.20: 1. REACH THE CLOUDS (R) 11.5, 2. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 3. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 4. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 5. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 6. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 7. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 8. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 9. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 10. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5.

RESULTS

PLUMPTON

2.20: 1. REACH THE CLOUDS (R) 11.5, 2. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 3. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 4. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 5. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 6. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 7. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 8. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 9. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 10. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5.

RESULTS

PLUMPTON

2.20: 1. REACH THE CLOUDS (R) 11.5, 2. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 3. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 4. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 5. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 6. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 7. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 8. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 9. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 10. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5.

RESULTS

PLUMPTON

2.20: 1. REACH THE CLOUDS (R) 11.5, 2. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 3. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 4. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 5. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 6. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 7. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 8. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 9. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 10. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5.

RESULTS

PLUMPTON

2.20: 1. REACH THE CLOUDS (R) 11.5, 2. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 3. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 4. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 5. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 6. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 7. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 8. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 9. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5, 10. MONTICRISTO (R) 11.5.

FOLKESTONE

1.30 Stone of Destiny 3.30 Bandox (nb)
2.00 Courage Under Fire 4.00 Clitral Air
2.30 Davila Rock 4.30 Brestonia Beauty
3.00 Hornstead 5.00 VERONICA FRANCO (nap)

WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

1. 02246 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 2. 02247 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 3. 02248 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 4. 02249 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 5. 02250 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 6. 02251 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 7. 02252 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 8. 02253 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 9. 02254 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 10. 02255 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5.

WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

1. 02256 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 2. 02257 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 3. 02258 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 4. 02259 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 5. 02260 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 6. 02261 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 7. 02262 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 8. 02263 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 9. 02264 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 10. 02265 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5.

WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

1. 02266 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 2. 02267 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 3. 02268 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 4. 02269 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 5. 02270 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 6. 02271 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 7. 02272 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 8. 02273 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 9. 02274 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 10. 02275 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5.

WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

1. 02276 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 2. 02277 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 3. 02278 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 4. 02279 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 5. 02280 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 6. 02281 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 7. 02282 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 8. 02283 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 9. 02284 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 10. 02285 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5.

WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

1. 02286 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 2. 02287 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 3. 02288 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 4. 02289 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 5. 02290 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 6. 02291 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 7. 02292 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 8. 02293 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 9. 02294 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 10. 02295 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5.

WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

1. 02296 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 2. 02297 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 3. 02298 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 4. 02299 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 5. 02300 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 6. 02301 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 7. 02302 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 8. 02303 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 9. 02304 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 10. 02305 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5.

WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

1. 02306 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 2. 02307 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 3. 02308 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 4. 02309 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 5. 02310 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 6. 02311 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 7. 02312 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 8. 02313 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 9. 02314 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 10. 02315 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5.

WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

1. 02316 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 2. 02317 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 3. 02318 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 4. 02319 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 5. 02320 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 6. 02321 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 7. 02322 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 8. 02323 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 9. 02324 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 10. 02325 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5.

WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

1. 02326 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 2. 02327 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 3. 02328 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 4. 02329 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 5. 02330 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 6. 02331 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 7. 02332 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 8. 02333 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 9. 02334 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 10. 02335 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5.

WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

1. 02336 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 2. 02337 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 3. 02338 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 4. 02339 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 5. 02340 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 6. 02341 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 7. 02342 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 8. 02343 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 9. 02344 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 10. 02345 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5.

WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

1. 02346 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 2. 02347 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 3. 02348 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 4. 02349 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 5. 02350 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 6. 02351 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 7. 02352 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 8. 02353 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 9. 02354 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 10. 02355 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5.

WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

1. 02356 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 2. 02357 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 3. 02358 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 4. 02359 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 5. 02360 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 6. 02361 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 7. 02362 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 8. 02363 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 9. 02364 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 10. 02365 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5.

WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

1. 02366 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 2. 02367 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 3. 02368 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 4. 02369 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 5. 02370 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 6. 02371 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 7. 02372 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 8. 02373 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 9. 02374 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5, 10. 02375 STONE OF DESTINY (11) (J. J. Jackson) 11.5.

WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

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WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

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WESTENHANGER MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS D) 2.00

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European trip finds Villa at crossroads

Brian Little needs his next big buy, whether it is Paul Gascoigne or not, to make an impact to match his fee. Aston Villa need success in Europe to keep their season alive.

Phil Shaw reflects on a club desperately trying to rediscover its winning formula.

Pessimists say that if you can see a light at the end of the tunnel, it probably means there is an express hurtling towards you. Just when it seemed Aston Villa and Brian Little were emerging from the darkest of starts to the season, they find make-or-break time approaching fast.

Capitulation in the Coca-Cola Cup at West Ham, followed by a Premiership home defeat against Wimbledon, means one of the pre-season favourites have only two competitions left in which to fulfil their manager's promise to win a trophy. But Villa have not lifted the FA Cup for 40 years, and in the Uefa Cup they face a torrid test in Bilbao tonight.

Meanwhile, Little still hopes to sign Paul Gascoigne, yet the element of risk extends beyond whether a flawed genius in his 31st year is worth £4m-plus. Little has not enjoyed conspicuous success with his previous big-money recruits and may not survive another dubious buy.

At the moment, his job is not

in jeopardy. Villa's players respect him and the fans identify with his obvious feeling for the club he first joined 30 years ago as a 15-year-old. Even that serial sacker of managers, "Deadly" Doug Ellis, has said the job is his "until I turn my toes up".

Although toe-curling tributes from the chairman did not save several predecessors from the swing of Ellis's axe, Little went into the campaign looking as secure as anyone in his profession. After replacing Ron Atkinson, he led Villa to successive top-five finishes and the Coca-Cola Cup in his first two years.

Stan Collymore was identified as the missing ingredient, and £7m did not seem excessive for a catalyst to turn them into title contenders. The portents were so promising that Little assured shareholders concerned by early setbacks that Villa would win some silverware this time.

When they had lost four in a row – the worst start in their history – he described the situation as "worse than my worst nightmare". So the bold idea of fielding a front three of Collymore, Dwight Yorke and Savo Milosevic was ditched. Villa reverted to the 3-5-2 system that Terry Venables once hailed as "a bridge between the English and Continental games" and results picked up briefly.

They have now lost six League games, however, and there are still 27 to go. Over the past decade the average number of defeats for the champions has been 4.6. Concentrating on the cups is all very well, but

mid-September is rather early to start.

In one sense, Little is a victim of his own achievements. On taking over he found Ellis "obsessed" with staying up and an ageing team who, while able to raise themselves for one-offs like Wembley or Internazionale, no longer had the appetite for three intense games a week.

He rebuilt the squad by stealth. The likes of Ray Houghton, Kevin Richardson and Dean Saunders were moved out, their places taken by the younger, hungrier Ian Taylor, Alan Wright and Gary Charles. Two of Atkinson's fringe players, Yorke and Ugo Ehiogu, became central to Little's strategy while Mark Bosnich took over permanently in goal.

Villa's rejuvenation appeared so complete that Ellis felt moved to call Little "priceless – the best in the League". Yorke rocketed into the £10m bracket and Ehiogu joined his Villa colleague Gareth Southgate in the England side. But while the former Darlington and Leicester manager showed a flair for bargains – Southgate, at £2m, is the outstanding example – his forays into the top end of the market have served Villa less well.

Since half his £29m outlay went on three players, it appears reasonable to expect them to have contributed more towards helping Villa cross the Rubicon. Milosevic, bought for £3.5m on the strength of a video, has a talent to bemuse. One minute

clumsy, gauche and more one-footed than anyone since Long John Silver, the next curling a shot round a keeper or hitting a deft pass with the outside of the foot.

Sasa Curcic, with Mark Draper the player most threatened by Gascoigne's possible arrival, cost £4m. A gifted runner with the ball, his apprecia-

tion of team patterns and his temperament are so suspect that Villa were prepared to absorb a £2m loss when Wolves enquired. After skipping training and criticising the club – not for the first time – he is now on probation.

As for Collymore, his response to being jeered on his return to Liverpool led Bir-

mingham's *Sports Argus* to praise him for "coming out fighting". By the time the paper hit the streets he had been sent off at Bolton... for fighting.

It is premature to write off a striker rated so highly by Glenn Hoddle. But a doubt persists, and is nagging again with the pursuit of Gazza, that Little tends to gamble on key

purchases. Villa ought to have been acquiring proven Premiership performers, especially when he was no longer inhibited by the problem he met on being spurned by Les Ferdinand in 1995. All he could offer then was a club who had avoided the drop.

Under-achievement can be an expensive business in foot-

ball, and not just in financial terms. While Collymore's solitary goal has cost Villa £350,000 in wages and Gascoigne might set them back £40,000 a week, Little knows, as he looks for a chink of light in Bilbao, that he could pay a far harsher price should he fail to satisfy the expectations he has raised.

Brian Little, the Aston Villa manager, is facing a test of his own and his team's character in Bilbao tonight

Photograph: Allsport

West Brom face test of promotion credentials

Richard Sneekes, the West Bromwich Albion midfielder player, believes two games in five days will determine if the Baggies are capable of staying in the promotion race.

Ray Harford's men take on pacesetters Nottingham Forest at the City Ground tonight and Sheffield United on Saturday at The Hawthorns.

Sneekes said: "The results from these games will be a pointer to how well we can expect to perform in the First Division this season."

"It's still too early to talk about where we will be in April, but one thing is certain

– if we want to be near the top, we have to beat the better teams like Forest and Sheffield United."

West Bromwich, who are now third just two points behind Forest, have a slight doubt over Sean Flynn, who suffered a cut head in the weekend win at Portsmouth.

Dave Bassett, the Forest manager, is ready to name an unchanged side, even though he was disappointed his team took only a point from a home match with struggling Tranmere on Saturday.

Their captain, Colin Cooper, said: "It's probably the

biggest First Division game of the season so far. If West Brom were to beat us, they would knock us off top spot, but, by the same token, we could open up a gap at the top by beating them. It's a vitally important game for both teams."

At the other end of the table the Huddersfield manager, Peter Jackson, is refusing to blame his injury jinx for his side's woeful start to the season.

Huddersfield have three key players on the long-term injury list and lie bottom of the table with no wins and just four points.

But before tonight's game with Port Vale, Jackson said:

"This club is not bottom of the table because of the injury situation. It's because of bad performances."

Jackson has dropped his interest in local-born striker Wayne Allison after failing to agree a price with Swindon. "We made a fair and firm offer for Wayne," Jackson said. "But they turned it down and we can't go any higher."

Ray Wilkins takes his Fulham side to the leaders, Watford, in the Second Division and sees the game as an ideal opportunity to measure progress made so far.

"Watford being the leaders means they are the team we

have to gauge ourselves against," Wilkins said. "I think it's been totally forgotten that we are a newly promoted side and it's a new experience for most of our players at this level."

"It's wrong to think we are going to thrash people left, right and centre, and we have to give the lads credit for what they have done so far. We have a lot of things to sort out, but we are all pulling together in the right direction."

Watford's manager, Graham Taylor, will not make many changes despite Saturday's defeat against Millwall, the Hornets' first loss in eight games.

Redknapp set for comeback

Jamie Redknapp is set to make his comeback for Liverpool in their Uefa Cup second round first leg against Strasbourg in France tonight.

The England midfielder player has not appeared for the first team since breaking an ankle playing in an international against South Africa at Old Trafford last season. But, after Liverpool's derby humiliation to Everton at the weekend, the 24-year-old could find himself thrown into the front line.

"I'm fit," Redknapp said. "I would like to play but I will have to wait and see what the boss says."

"It has been difficult sitting and watching, and I've had enough of injury problems."

The Norwegian Oyvind Leonhardsen could also play his first full game of the season, after hamstring problems had kept him on the sidelines since his £3.5m move from Wimbledon in the summer.

The Liverpool manager, Roy Evans, has found his squad undermined by injuries. He was forced to leave behind strikers Karlheinz Riedle (groin) and Patrik Berger (Achilles), and is also without Phil Babb and Jamie Carragher for the first leg.

Without Riedle and Berger, Liverpool can either play Michael Owen up front alongside Robbie Fowler, or revert to a five-man midfield with Fowler alone in attack.

Michael Thomas's display in midfield against Everton was not particularly reassuring, and Evans could opt to pair Redknapp alongside Paul Ince with Leonhardsen and Steve McManaman on the flanks.

In defence, too, he has problems, but at least he can field a fit-again Rob Jones, while Mark Wright – whose experience could be crucial – is also available after a back problem.

Clive Woodward is the cheeky chappie from Form 5B who has an answer for everything



ALAN WATKINS ON RUGBY

England's managers have been a mixed lot. Geoff Cooke was the honest professional who believed in winning. Jack Rowell was the enigmatic boardroom boss who was always promising a dividend tomorrow but never today. Clive Woodward is the cheeky chappie from Form 5B who always has an answer for everything.

He looks like being the most entertaining of the bunch personally, though whether he can produce entertaining rugby as well – as he says he wants to – is another matter. Cooke at any rate would have echoed Alex Ferguson of Manchester United, saying that if people want entertainment, they can go to the bloody circus.

Woodward was clearly right to prune drastically England's original squad of 77. A squad of such a number is a contradiction in terms.

Whether he was right to cut it to 23, as he did to start with, is more questionable. That number likewise is something of a contradiction.

For the essence of a squad is surely that its members should play to an agreed pattern and that in specific positions the players should be interchangeable. Thus a right wing cannot always play on the left. An outside centre is not invariably happy on the inside. Tight-head and loose-head props are different. Front and middle jumpers require their specialisms. The No 6 is now, commonly, in build and style, nearer to a No 8 than to a No 7.

These obvious truths inevitably lead to a squad of 30. This does not imply a rota system, which is a mistake that Bath, among other clubs have made. This is being demonstrated weekly in the entertaining and well-written television series that

is now proceeding. A country which picked its players on a rota basis, instead of that of the best team available, would be considered quite mad. Why then should a leading professional club be any different?

Woodward was also right to base his selection on the Lions party in South Africa. Tim Simpson, though he appeared slow on the turn and not altogether sure in his handling, made numerous good attacking runs. Above all, he transformed himself – or was transformed by Dave Aldred – into a formidable place-kicker. And John Bentley was one of the stars, of whom Stuart Barnes, the Bill Deedes, or perhaps the Willie Whitelaw, of rugby commentating remarked: "If he were in India, he'd be one of the untouchables."

Matt Dawson's marvellous dummy and try should ensure him

enough preliminary capital to gain preference over Austin Healey, Kyran Bracken or the unlucky fourth man, Andy Gomarsall. On the left wing I should have no hesitation in choosing Adedayo Adebayo, who did not go to South Africa, over Tony Underwood, who did, even if the latter managed to regain fitness in time.

This leaves the troubled midfield. If I have anything against Rowell, it is that last season he did not give us the opportunity to see Jeremy Guscott in his silver age, except as a substitution. Perhaps we shall never see him again. We shall almost certainly not see him before Christmas.

It has been suggested that Mike Catt should be paired with Will Greenwood in the centre, with Alex King at outside-half. It would be even more exciting if Gary Connolly could be lured back from rugby

league and played outside Greenwood. Before the new year last season, when he returned to league, Connolly added I should say 50 per cent to the Harlequin back division.

Allan Bateman, a similar player, did the same or more for Richmond last Saturday, as he did for Wales last season. With the Lions against South Africa he was given no chance except in the last Test as a substitute, on account of the presence of Guscott. Both Bateman and Connolly possess speed, anticipation, unselfishness and, above all, the capacity to break two or three tackles while staying on their feet before delivering the crucial pass. But getting Connolly into the England side would clearly require complicated negotiations.

No such manoeuvres would be necessary in assembling a front row. This is also one of Woodward's worries; or it ought to be. When Jeff

Probyn, whose views I normally respect, said recently that the England front row, presumably consisting of Graham Rowntree, Mark Regan and Jason Leonard, could take on any Lions trio I really could not understand what he thought he was talking about.

For in South Africa these England players proved a grievous disappointment. The Celtic contingent of Tom Smith, Keith Wood and Paul Wallace were preferred instead. From England's point of view the present trouble derives from persisting with Leonard at tight head when he is a natural loose head.

My team would be: T Simpson, J Bentley, G Connolly, W Greenwood, A Adebayo, M Catt, M Dawson, J Leonard, M Regan, J Mallen, M Johnson, S Shaw, L Dallaglio (capt), T Rodber, R Hill.

Don't miss this.

Athletic Bilbao vs Aston Villa from 8:15 tonight

TENNIS

Agassi all talk after brief encounter

The Eurocard Open said hello and goodbye to Andre Agassi when the Las Vegas turned up to accept a wild card into the \$2.3m ATP Tour event in Stuttgart yesterday. Ah, well, says John Roberts, bring on the Brits.

It is a sign of changing times and faces that we are now able to spend the start of a \$2.3m (£1.5m) tournament watching Andre Agassi, a wild card ranked No 102 in the world, play Todd Martin, a lucky loser, to win away the time until Brits take the court.

Our old friend Agassi, not seen since his departure from the United States Open seven weeks ago, popped back into the game for 70 minutes yesterday, lost in straight sets in the opening round of the Eurocard Open, and talked a rosy future.

The 1992 Wimbledon champion's chat, unlike much of his performance, was filled with

commitment and good intentions. This is just as well, considering that his record for the year is 12 wins and 13 defeats, a poor return when set against the workload of his wife, the actress Brooke Shields.

As Agassi said: "The only American I'm aware of that works harder than Brooke is the President of the United States. I mean, this girl, she doesn't stop. She's like the damn Energizer Bunny. She works hard and it is very important to her to do everything she does well and to do it with everything she has."

Might there be a lesson for hubby? "Quite honestly, I think I have been nothing short of frustrating for her recently on that level. So her support has been actually motivating. As a fairy-tale as it may sound, she wants whatever I want for myself and right now she knows what it is."

Had there been occasions when he wondered if it was worth trying to make the effort? "No. It is worth it, because it's not about anything but a personal desire of mine. A lot of times my career was filled with doing stuff for other reasons, but

this is important to me. I need to do it for myself. I really want to play. I want to play hard."

Martin, whose season has been hampered by an elbow injury, broke once in each set to eliminate his American compatriot, 6-4, 6-4. Agassi took some consolation from holding serve to love at 3-5 in the second set.

So where does that leave Agassi? "I think with hard work, improving my footwork, losing a little bit of weight, getting a bit stronger, I am thinking a couple of months in the next year I could be literally playing great tennis."

Agassi is about to wind up his tournament year by taking a wild card into next week's indoor event in Paris. At least he turned up here, which was more than could be said for wild cards had been set aside for him in Basel and Vienna.

Tim Henman, ranked No 19, is due to play this afternoon against the young German Tommy Haas, runner-up in Lyon last week. Greg Rusedski, given a bye as the No 5 seed, plays Germany's Nicolas Pietrangeli in the second round tomorrow.

ROWING

Redgrave has diabetes

Steven Redgrave, a rowing gold medal winner in four successive Olympics, has diabetes.

Hugh Matheson details the new challenge facing the awesomely tough competitor as he prepares for Sydney 2000.

The bad news for Steven Redgrave came on 29 September when doctors at High

Wycombe General in Buckinghamshire told him why a fit 35-year-old athlete should have returned from a family holiday feeling lethargic and weak.

Dr Laurence Fandler, a consultant diabetologist, pointed out that insulin-dependent diabetes is more commonly found in people under 40 and that a patient of Redgrave's fitness would, provided he managed the condition appropriately, lead a normal life.

Redgrave learned the diagnosis days before beginning training for the new season in

the coxless four who won the World Championship in September. Although depressed by the news, he discussed it with the other members of the four, James Cracknell, Tim Foster and his long-time partner, Matthew Pinsent.

Along with the coach, Jürgen Grobler, they agreed that he should train on within the group and monitor his progress. "The number one thing is his health," Grobler said. "Provided he can train effectively we want him in the four but it must not be at the risk of his health."



The robe (shown above), trunks and shoes which Muhammad Ali wore in 1974 when he beat George Foreman for the world heavyweight title in the "Rumble in the Jungle" drew some of the highest bids on Sunday in Beverly Hills, California, at an auction of Ali memorabilia.

All regained the heavyweight championship with an eighth-round knock-out of Foreman in Zaire. The white cloth, calf-length robe decorated with African patterns and elaborate beadwork was sold for \$154,500 (£97,000) to a telephone bidder. The trunks sold for \$57,500 and the shoes went for \$59,500 to separate bidders in the tent at Christie's.

"It's great. A lot of Muhammad Ali's fans have spoken for their love for Ali and the memorabilia that's available," said Ronnie Paloger, a Los Angeles businessman who put his private collection on the block.

All was said by his attorney to be dis-

appointed about the auction. He did not participate and will not profit from it. Ali had earlier said some of the items were stolen from him, but Christie's officials said Paloger owned everything on offer.

"I haven't done anything other than put together a great collection," said Paloger, who amassed about 3,000 items over a seven-year period. Asked if he was bothered by the criticism, Paloger smiled and said: "Muhammad Ali's my hero. He's still the greatest."

Another robe worn by Cassius Clay, Ali's name before he converted to the Muslim religion, sold for \$20,000. The robe, from the fight with Sonny Liston on 25 February 1964, features the words "The Lip" stitched on the back in red letters.

The auction drew a varied crowd, some of whom were too young to have seen Ali in his heyday of the 1960s and 1970s.

Photograph: Reuter

RUGBY UNION

All Blacks secure biggest-ever sponsorship deal

New Zealand's state-of-the-art rugby union team were even more in the black than usual yesterday as Adidas, the German sportswear group, finalised a record-breaking kit agreement.

Chris Hewitt reports on another spectacular success for Sean Fitzpatrick's pacesetters.

When you're hot, you're hot. The All Blacks can do no wrong at the moment - the reigning Tri-Nations champions have not lost a match for well over a year - and yesterday, they raked in an estimated £28m of new money as Adidas beat their rival sportswear manufacturers, Nike, to the biggest sponsorship deal in rugby history. All they need to do now is persuade Elton John to record a version of the "haka". A Christmas No 1 would be guaranteed.

Nike, who recently clinched a £20m deal with England and have both the Springboks and Brazil's world champion football team in their portfolio, had been favourites to land the All Black contract after putting almost £26m on the table. David Moffett, the chief executive of the New Zealand Rugby Football Union, refused to divulge the precise value of the Adidas offer but he confirmed that it was in excess of the Nike bid.

Adidas will supply kit, footwear and other sports equipment for the next five years, not just to the All Blacks but to other New Zealand representative sides, including their Super 12 provincial teams. Kevin Roberts, an NZRFU board member, insisted that the national shirt would not be changing radically, which will come as a relief to those traditionalists who believe Australia's new Reebok shirt resembles nothing more palatable than a bad night after a lobster dinner.

"We've sold out nothing here," Roberts said. "We have total control of the property and we'll stay the men in black. The deal puts us ahead of anyone else in the rugby world." The legitimacy of that view was reinforced yesterday by Cliff Brittle, chairman of the English RFU, who said: "The agreement illustrates the things we have been saying for some time. The All Blacks are the best team in the world and if you are a successful international team, the sponsors will queue up to put big money into your national game."

SAILING

Dalton prepared for fight to finish

The crews in the Whitbread Round-the-World Race will be glad when the first leg is over, as Stuart Alexander reports from Cape Town.

Frostad also said that "the galley is empty" echoing a shortage of food that is becoming prevalent on a 7,350-mile leg from Southampton that has taken longer than many planned. On America's Challenge, the skipper, Ross Field, said they had no milk powder and were using orange-flavoured, reconstituted isotonic drink for both cornflakes and tea.

Both Dalton and Frostad are expected in this evening with the British boat, Silk Cut, secure in its fourth place, forecast to arrive in the early hours of Thursday morning. The time gap, now that the race is scored on accumulated points rather than time, is therefore less of a worry for Silk Cut's skipper, Lawrie Smith. But the back markers, EF Education's all-woman crew and the Dutch boat, Brunel Sunergy, will be battling on into next week.

WHITBREAD ROUND THE WORLD RACE (first leg, 7,350 miles, Southampton to Cape Town) Latest positions: 1. EF Education (Swi) 2. Brunel Sunergy (D) 3. America's Challenge (US) 4. Silk Cut (GB) 5. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 6. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 7. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 8. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 9. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 10. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 11. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 12. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 13. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 14. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 15. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 16. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 17. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 18. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 19. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 20. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 21. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 22. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 23. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 24. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 25. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 26. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 27. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 28. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 29. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 30. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 31. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 32. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 33. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 34. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 35. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 36. Volvo Ocean Race (S) 37. 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GOLF

Young again go free at the Open

Juniors will again be admitted free to the Open Championship next year at Royal Birkdale. The success of the scheme when it was introduced for this year's Open at Royal Troon, which saw the number of under-18s attending the championship more than double, has encouraged the Royal & Ancient to extend its policy of reduced tickets for youngsters.

Next year all under-16s will be admitted free, while a new youths' ticket for 16 to 21-year-olds will cost only £10 during the championship and £4 on practice days.

"We identified an anomaly in ticket prices where under-18s were given free entry but over-18s had to pay the full price," said David Hill, secretary of the R&A's championship committee. "This seemed to us to be unfair and so we have introduced the youths' ticket."

The R&A took the lead this year to encourage youngsters to attend one of the world's top sporting events free of charge. They estimated over 28,000 juniors were at Royal Troon, as opposed to previous averages of 12,000.

Anyone applying for free tickets should do so to the R&A, accompanying their application with a letter of identification from a school or golf club, or they can be admitted on the day with a "responsible adult".

While general ticket prices were left at 1996 levels for this year, at Birkdale the daily admission price will rise slightly to £25, but season tickets offering discounts of nearly 50 per cent can be obtained by offering before 31 January 1998.

— Andy Farrell



Royal Pontefract: with the Prince of Wales colliery as a backdrop, a common handicap is won by the Queen's runner, Rutland Chantry, at the Yorkshire course yesterday

Photograph: David Ashdown

'A country which picked its players on a rota basis, instead of that of the best team available, would be considered mad' — Alan Watkins, page 30

Villa relying on Collymore to find his touch in Basque country

Since his move from Liverpool, Aston Villa's beleaguered striker, Stan Collymore, has saved his best displays for Europe. His manager, Brian Little, is in need of another one tonight says Phil Shaw.

Stan Collymore may be no saint, but "The Cathedral", as Athletic Bilbao's San Mames stadium is known, could be just the stage for the £7m striker to start answering Aston Villa's prayers tonight.

Brian Little is confident that it will be. The Villa manager, looking anything but beleaguered despite a turbulent descent into Spain, pledged to restore Collymore to his side for the first leg of their Uefa Cup second-round tie even though he began a three-match do-

mestic suspension on Saturday. Collymore, who has scored once in 13 appearances for Villa, had his two best games in the claret and blue against Bordeaux in the previous round. Little now hopes that the quasi-religious fervour for which this bastion of Basque pride is renowned can help to fire up his record signing in similar fashion.

"Bilbao will be concerned about Stan, which is important for us," he said. "While he has missed a few chances — he could have had a goal every other game — we've got to keep encouraging him and get him back to his one-in-two career ratio."

Contrary to the complaints of some Villa fans, who have criticised Collymore's work rate, Little feels he may have been trying too hard to impress since arriving from Liverpool. "Players need to feel good but Stan has looked a bit worried. He hasn't been as relaxed as he should be. He wants to do so well, and

sometimes that can affect you."

Villa have had Bilbao watched three times. The reports from Peter Withe and Tony McAndrew confirm the impression created by their home and away victories over Sampdoria. Technically good, they are also capable of playing with a verve that reflects their English origins (the club were formed by itinerant workers from Wearside; hence the anglicised name and the red-and-white stripes à la Sunderland).

"The first game Peter saw was a derby with Sociedad which was like similar occasions in England. Fast and furious, people pressing and closing each other down quickly. When he watched them away they were far more low key, so I'll be interested to hear from Tony how they approached Saturday's draw with Deportivo."

Asked whether a British-style tempo might be more to Villa's liking, Little replied: "We're so

Jekyll and Hyde right now, it's untrue. We're playing well some games, then throwing three goals in our net in others. So we've got to concentrate for 90 minutes and be at our best, then see what they have to offer. If we're as careless as we have been, it'll be a hard night's work."

His priority is a result close enough to convince a full house at Villa Park a fortnight hence that they can take the tie. A repeat of the 1-1 draw they earned at Bilbao in the same competition 20 years ago, when Little and Andy Gray filled the roles now earmarked for Collymore and Dwight Yorke, would more than suffice.

Little said he would make one change from the team which drew 0-0 in Bordeaux, the smart money being on Mark Draper for Sasa Curcic. There will be no Serbs in the home line-up nor even, strictly speaking, any Spaniards. The coach's job at Bilbao is often held by foreigners — Ron-

nie Allen and Howard Kendall are among the Frenchman Luis Fernandez's predecessors — yet the players must be Basque.

Fernandez has also spent heavily, paying Real Betis £9m to bring the one-time Manchester United target Roberto Rios home, though with only slightly more success than Villa so far. Five of their seven League fixtures have been drawn and only Atletico Madrid, conquerors of Leicester, beaten.

Nevertheless, civic self-esteem is high after the global failure of the Guggenheim museum. For a mere 14,000m pesetas (£50m), a dour, industrial city has acquired a landmark to make the Sydney Opera House look like the Birmingham Bull Ring.

Critics argue that Bilbao has had to buy an international reputation. As Villa may discover at their peril, Athletic built that long ago.

Little needs lift, page 30

Benfica linked with move for Strachan

Coventry City could come under pressure from Benfica to part with their manager, Gordon Strachan.

Valer Vedeo, who is the favourite to be elected as president of the Lisbon club, has named Strachan as the man he wants to be the coach. The former Scotland international impressed Vedeo by keeping Coventry in the Premiership last season. If elected today, Vedeo is understood to want to

make immediate contact with Highfield Road. "Gordon Strachan would be my first option as the coach to lead Benfica into the future," he said.

Newcastle have promised their manager, Kenny Dalglish, cash for more players, even though the club's wage bill has risen sharply. Total salaries of players and coaching staff increased by more than £4m last year, according to the club's annual report released yesterday.

The arrival of players, like Alan Shearer, as well as Dalglish and a new backroom team, has seen wage costs reach new heights. Newcastle now spend £15.4m a year on wages for their staff of 200, having spent £10.2m the year before. Newcastle plc's chairman, Sir Terence Harrison, says in the report: "Of the increase, £4.1m relates directly to footballing personnel."

The Tyneside club have made an operating profit before

tax of £8.3m, compared to a loss of £23.6m the year before — the loss mostly due to Shearer's £15m transfer and purchase of other players.

Harrison said Dalglish would continue to be given money "for selective squad strengthening", but the report added that transfers would be funded through profits alone.

More financial news yesterday centred on Chelsea and the disclosure that the Harrods own-

er, Mohamed Al-Fayed, attempted to acquire a majority stake at Stamford Bridge before his takeover of Fulham. The bid got as far as "informal talks".

England's campaign to host the 2006 World Cup was lifted yesterday by a £3m award to the Football Association from the English Sports Council. The handout is likely to provide a third of the cost of the bid.

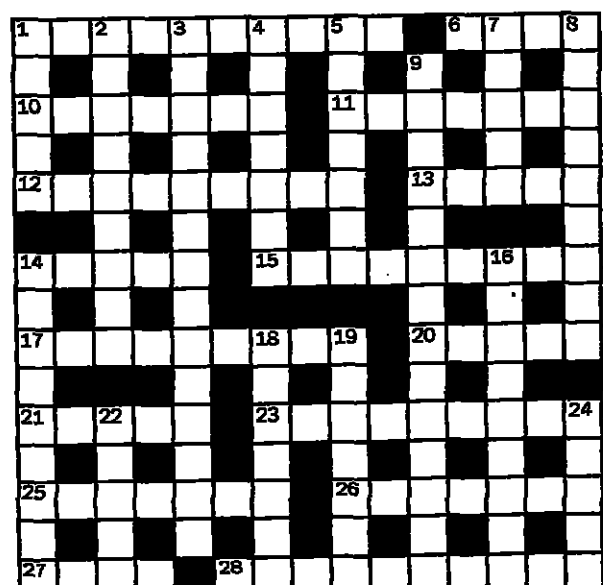
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THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3435. Tuesday 21 October

by Aelred

Monday's Solution



ACROSS

- 1 One hurries to deliver hat after word of deference (4,6)
- 6 Cut end off key (4)
- 10 Choose one unit of heat and of light (7)
- 11 Material seems good to gallery (7)
- 12 Be too belligerent perhaps and fail to stop in time (9)
- 13 Took in Duke's status (5)
- 14 Skillful creation carrying oxygen to one? Could be (5)
- 15 Man carrying equivalent of a dollar is odd (9)
- 17 American, a marine, keeps benefit back, which is sensational (9)
- 20 Long growths of hair will provide shade (5)

DOWN

- 1 Almost do things wrong taking note of ordinary clothes (5)
- 2 Perhaps still life paintings I suppress (9)
- 25 Cheers I give to last batsmen? (4,3)
- 26 I go wrong in tip for cooking (7)
- 27 Tear off showing speed (4)
- 28 Who could refer to such neat decent sorts? (10)
- 1 Soap when agitated in Post Office (5)
- 2 Church & state suppressed the doctor's article (9)
- 3 Support one in charge of Spanish car? Not this person (4,4,6)

- 4 Wanted no tails to be seen in agreeable heavenly body (7)
- 5 Material that could stretch from the last ice age (7)
- 7 Beast of burden coming up a London street (5)
- 8 Thrills you don't pay for but which feature in soccer matches (4,5)
- 9 One seen at car boot sale? (7,7)
- 14 Woman spent a term in old school (4,5)
- 16 To have things shaken up is a modern doing (9)
- 18 Leave a sash in place (7)
- 19 Fix English diplomat (7)
- 22 Glad time becomes dim (5)
- 24 Leave without having to take a meal (5)

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